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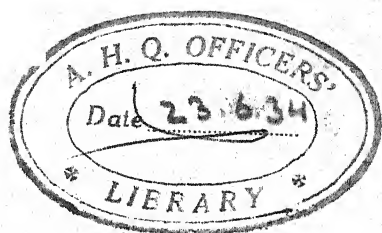


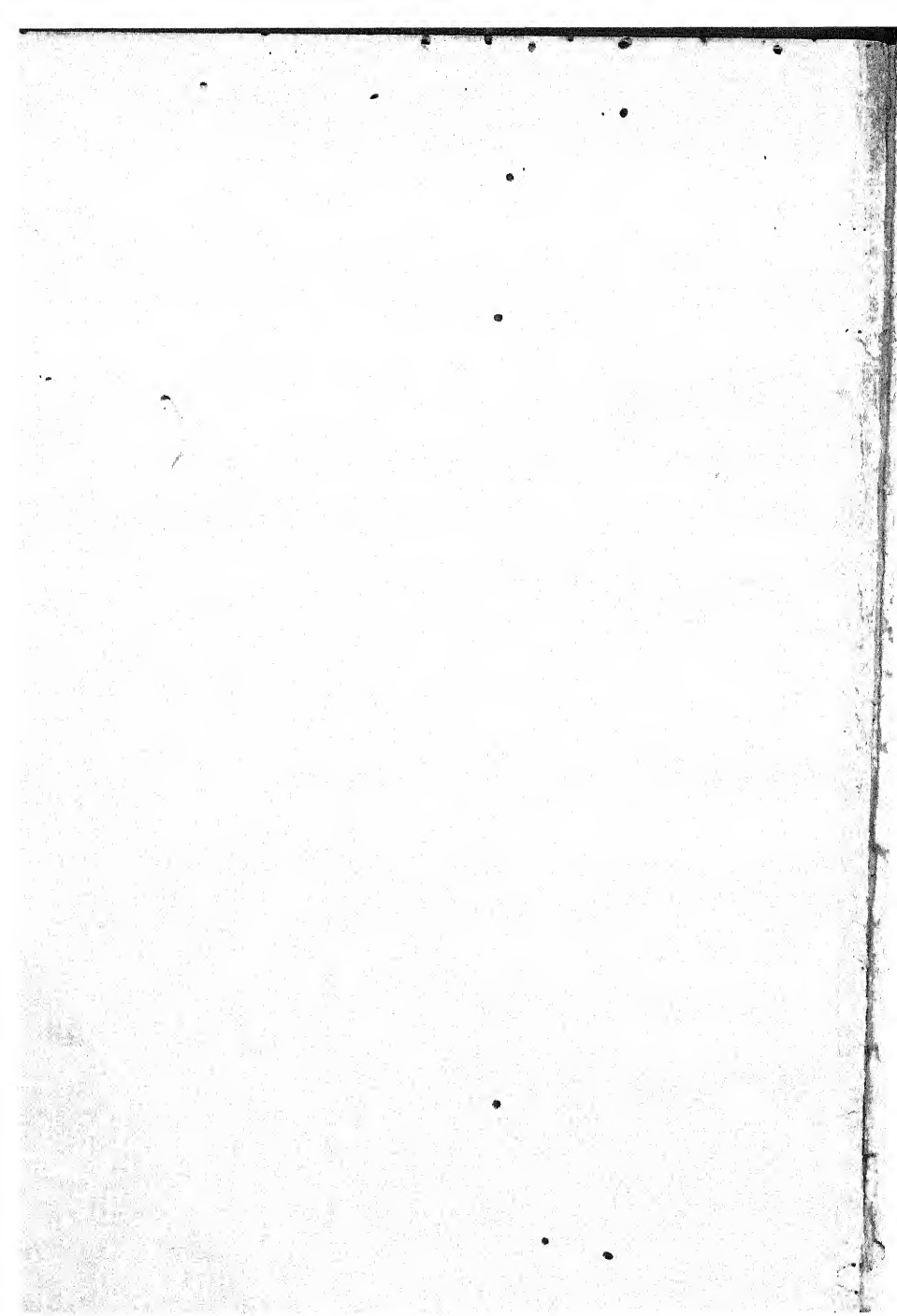
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BRITAIN, THE WORLD  
AND THE WAR GOD



By the same Author

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### THE QUEEN IN HER STORE-ROOM.

HER MAJESTY (TO HER FAITHFUL SERVANT). "I DON'T KNOW WHAT MAY HAPPEN, MR. BULL, BUT 'KEEP OUR POWDER DRY.'"

[Reproduced by permission of the Proprietors of 'Punch.'

# BRITAIN, THE WORLD AND THE WAR GOD

BY

LIEUT.-GENERAL

SIR GEORGE MACMUNN

K.C.B., K.C.S.I., D.S.O., p.s.c.

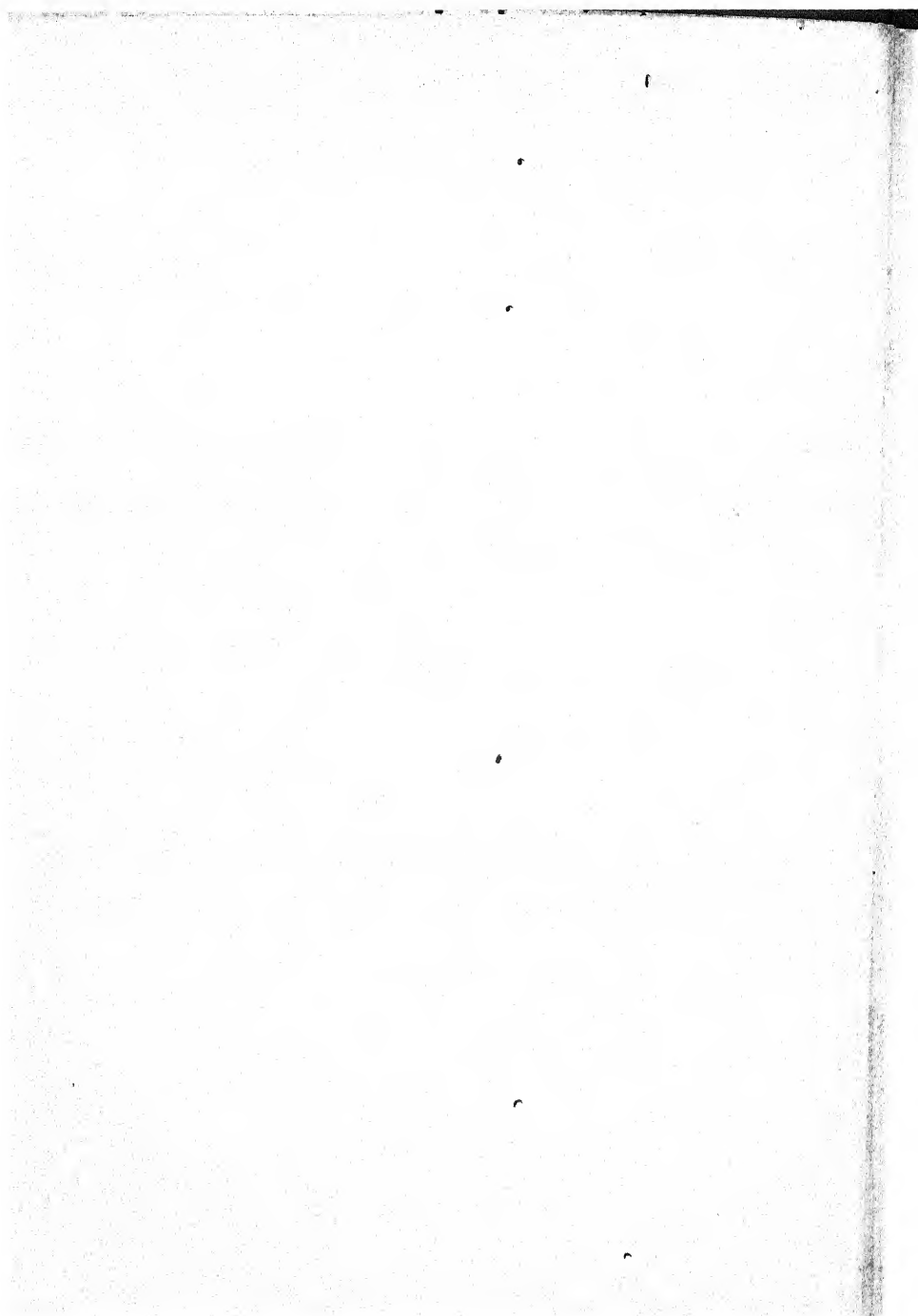
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## FOREWORD

"The Prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule there-by . . . and my people love to have it so."—JEREMIAH.

BECAUSE the world is so scared at the spectre of the War God, because so many of our prophets prophesy falsely, and because our public are bewildered, I have ventured to print what started as notes for a son reading for the Staff College.

I have perhaps exceeded courtesy in the use of such words as "*kiss-mammy*", "*hot-air*", and "*tripe*", but none better describe some of the sayings of the egregious ones. When the *Res Publica* is in some peril, words need not be measured.



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I

THE WAR GOD IN EUROPE



## CHAPTER I

### THE WAR GOD WALKS AGAIN

The Rattle of the Sabre—The Post-War Europe—Who is Doing the Rattling?—Pre-War Germany and the Blond Beast—Post-War Germany—The Excision of Russia from the Body Corporate—The Far East.

#### THE RATTLE OF THE SABRE

“Over the roads of purple,  
You can hear the limber reel—  
*There!* was a spark from the horse hoofs  
There! was a stint of steel.”

THE War God Walks again! That was the first feeling that overtook Britain when the news came that Germany had left the disarmament conference and had abandoned the League of Nations. It came, too, when the world had for months been watching ominous signs of quarrel and cleavage. Those of the Socialist party who love to fish in cesspools, and cast lies upon the water, actually tried to make political capital, by accusing the Nationalist Government of being a pro-war party, and even it is said snatched an election and a National seat by such poisoned bait. If that be true it but shows how vivid in the minds of our people is their memory of the World War and how easily is public opinion stampeded at any hint that war can come again.

The fear came with a rush, and a week or so before that Fête of Civilization, Armistice Day. More than ever were the pathetic little crosses of memory placed in the Field

of Remembrance at Westminster and round the war memorials of Merry England, that still puts aside a day to remembrance. More than ever did the mothers and widows throng the Armistice Day Service in Whitehall with the medals of husbands and sons on bosoms that still can mourn.

But still, when all is said and mourned, does the War God Walk again, to use Britten Austin's phrase? Is it possible that once again civilization gone mad shall tear itself in tatters and destroy all that it has striven for for years? If not, what is it all about, and if so, what is the truth, what are the disturbing factors, and who is responsible?

Is it true that the arsenals and war factories of this country are working double time, is it true that the General Staff work day and night in preparation for war? And here perhaps the answer must be both yes, and no.

How is it that Germany and her Hitler, Germany into whose soul the horror and punishment for war have entered more deeply and more cruelly, if more vicariously deservedly, than any other, should once again be beating the war drum? Should be hailing war, and the will to war, as the finest manifestation of divine and human spirit?

It is a complex problem and a complex answer; one with which the whole hope of Christendom is irrevocably concerned. What is the truth? What is it all about? How can we put it right? How much of it all is unavoidable? How much of it is of Heaven as Hitler insists, and how much of Hell?

It will be the endeavour of this book to explore the whole war question in brief, to separate truth from fallacy and to see how and when if at all, Christian countries and Christian people may keep the dread word War in their vocabulary. In doing so we must cover something of the old ground, and re-open old sores.

## THE POST-WAR EUROPE

The Post-War Europe had a very long way to go. Had the nations settled down into their old frontiers to pick up the threads of social and economic life, it would have been hard enough after the years of desolation, of waste hearths and empty treasuries, but it had to readjust itself to a hundred different territorial, economic, and political conditions. As we look back on all the world went through, it is easy to marvel that it has recovered at all, rather than to be surprised at what it still lacks.

Nor does it profit anything for the young folk of to-day to say that "old folk indulged in folly. What have we to do with it?" As a man cannot get away from his shadow, so a people cannot get away from their past. They may graft new ways, they may deplore old errors, but the past must be with them, to mitigate, to avoid, if you like, or as is usually the case, to benefit by; but the sins of the fathers will come upon the children, and there is no way out of it.

The young who gird, may also feel that there is not one good thing that they enjoy, and not one success that they achieve, that has not been made possible for them by the achievements and the labours of their forefathers. They must be content with the good and the bad, the ups and the downs.

*Quare fremuerunt gentes? Why do the people complain?* It is theirs to rebuild and put right, but by solid hard doing and patience, and not by jazz and short cuts. The 'Way' of Gautama the Buddha, is the 'Way' of all life. 'Right-doing', 'Right-speaking', 'Right-thinking', and so forth; that is the 'Way'. But it is not always easy to see, and so young Europe may be finding it.

The old frontiers and the old groupings were the result of much trial and error. The Austrian Empire was an



anomaly, but an anomaly that time had shown alone seemed to cope and compete with the world that earlier fathers had left them in the crash of the Byzantine Empire; the coming of Islam across the Hellespont; the clash and drive of Danubian folk of Slav and Tartar races. We have yet to see if the building of Versailles will stand, and if Europe does not need an Austrian Empire; if the North and South German Federation were not the natural combinations; if Prussia is not better with her Letts and her Tartars and her Teutonic Knights' provinces in a northern group, than in the fictitious grouping of the Bismarkian ambition. The teaching of Martin Luther and the loom of the Thirty Years War, left divisions that time can hardly mend.

As the 'Peace' grouped the world, it is perhaps a wonder that things are not even more restless.

#### WHO IS DOING THE RATTLING?

Who is it that rattles the sabre and has frightened the British from their beds, from their golf and their reconstruction of big business, their film going and their slum stunts. Is it France? Hardly, Yes, and No! France stands anxious financially, anxious enough for peace, mindful, thrice-mindful, of all that she has suffered. Yes, she rattles the sabre at the suggestion that her great enemy shall ever become dangerous again, and that her sons and grandsons shall endure what the present matured generation have seen. France, if she does not rattle the sabre has her hand on it lest worse befall. How can we change that, knowing what we know?

Is Germany rattling her sabre? Obviously emphatically, because she says that she is debased, humiliated, lowered in her own estimation and that of the world. She is calling aloud for a sufficiency of arms, which she, the apostle of the strong right-arm, is not allowed to possess! She will not realise that scornful cats must eat horrid mice, that

*vae victis*, is within reason the rule of even a Christian world, and that those who take to the sword shall perish by the sword. Fortunately as yet, her quota of sabres is limited.

It might be said to her "Had *you* been victorious, all the world would be groaning, no loans would *you* have paid for restitution. Your foot on the world's neck would have stayed there". All the world knows it, and only the New Germany which is growing extremely like the Old Germany, forgets it, and wonders why the world does not like her, and then she turns and bites her Jew boys that have so helped her culture, just to show what a nice kind nature she has.

Before we look at the New Germany and her *Wander-vögel* and all the bright young people whom humanity must wish happiness to, we shall have to see once again what the Germany of 1914 was, and then see what we can make of it. Yes! Germany rattles the sabre or wants to. No wonder the world is afraid. If it is adamant, it perhaps crashes a fine young people; if it gives way it may have the work to do again. Because you see Herr Hitler has suddenly made the Blond Beast snarl. What a dilemma!

Who else stands sabre rattling? Italy? Not quite; Italy is concerned in her own stability and prosperity. We must never forget the wild state of anarchy and mad futile communism from which the Duce saved her. If she rattles her sabre it is but calling 'Attention' to wavering minds. We cannot imagine her rattling a sabre save as a gesture to her breeds lesser than the Sardinian.

What of Russia? Does Russia rattle a sabre? She does most emphatically in that her whole berserk attitude towards civilization does so automatically. Dangers there also are round the world, and later on we must look at the Far East, and British policy, but we cannot get away from the fact that the noise which has frightened us comes from Germany 'wouffing' at France like a tiger in her cage, and France standing to arms outside, lest the tiger escape.

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The 'wouff' is the 'wouff' of Germany, the ring of the rifle butt on the ground is the answer of France. There are many of the wiser heads in the world who say 'Thank God for France! for unsentimental hit-the-nail-on-the-head France.' That we will also look into anon.

Now for a moment, before we think of the good modern Germany that would not hurt a fly till Hitler came along, let us look at the Germany of 1914, before she ran her head into that brick wall that her statesmen had failed to see.

These verses from *The Times*<sup>1</sup> of 1916 show pretty clearly what the British thought, who unexpectedly had to leave their country houses, their golf links and their gardens. Just such young men with a trifle more guts, than the vacuous young pacifists of Oxford.

### EXPECTATION

Let me live on! I only ask to live  
 Until the War be ended, and I see  
 What is the verdict that the Heavens give  
 To Wrong and Fraud, and Force and Treachery.

I would outlast this strife, 'twere but an hour,  
 I would see Belgium righted and repaid,  
 I would see gallant France in queenly power,  
 And little Serbia free and unafraid.

And storied Italy regain her coasts,  
 And mighty Russia seated on the Sea,  
 And martyred Montenegro's murdered hosts  
 Give back their sons a larger liberty.

And I would know that Poland breathed anew,  
 Her ancient glory granted her again,  
 And my dear England greater than she knew,  
 And my dead son, one hero of the slain.

H. B.

<sup>1</sup> Printed here by kind permission of the Proprietors.

## THE PRE-WAR GERMANY AND THE BLOND BEAST

That young Germany is anxious to remove the war-guilt stigma that the Peace Treaty has nailed to the mast of Time is natural enough. But the world, and Time itself apart from the scribbling of the hot-air merchant, will record it, knowing that in the world sense, it was so. When Germany, the good kindly Germany of the mid-Victorian days, the Germany of dreams and visions, of music and of deep thinking, sold herself to the Hun, to the half-Tartar Prussian, and learnt her swan song of *Deutschland uber Alles*—a far more arrogant conception than ever was *Rule Britannia*—then she became the Blond Beast once again.

It is not to be denied; and England, or shall we say Britain, for England is half Teuton, but Britain is half-Celt, should be the last to forget it. It need not tinge our daily thoughts, but it should remain ever at the back of our minds. The writer knew very intimately those officers of the British General Staff most concerned with German affairs in 1913 and 1914, and it is no exaggeration to say that they returned from the German Army manœuvres the '*Kaiser Manœuvres*' of 1913 obsessed, nay dismayed, by the knowledge gained that war was inevitable, that both the civil and military classes of Germany thought only of war, and war with England. *Der Tag*<sup>1</sup> that was openly drank before them, was *Der Tag* of the War with England, England that stood between them and the dominion of the World. That was their ambition, the Dominion of the World. The Kaiser would gladly have shared it, at any rate for a while, with good German England, but because England would not join him, she was the great barrier.

*Der Tag*, meant that the other name for the North Sea, the German Ocean, should be the one and only name.

<sup>1</sup> *Der Tag*—The Day.

*Der Tag* meant that no longer should England instinctively support the balance of power in Europe, that no longer should this sixpenny army that dared to Troop the Colour before the military staffs of Europe each 24th of May, in bear-skin caps and red coats, flaunt itself as the sign of a nation. Potsdam grenadiers should make sailors and rule the waves however much Bismarck had warned against it. England must go! Lest we forget this, remember, that the '*Hymn of Hate*' was exclusively anti-English. The Kaiser had forgotten, perhaps that principle so inimitably expressed by *Punch*, that *Got Straf England* was wrong. The Scottish soldier indignantly crosses it out on the wall of a French cottage, and writes 'Britain' for England. Did not the Sinn Fein Division 'God Bless them!' go over the top to the cry of 'Up the Rebels'.

However, that is all by the way, Germany was clamouring for war with England, and to quote the words of a Scottish statesman on another occasion, "She has asked for war, and by God, gentlemen, she shall have it."

And so the poor Blond Beast found that Britain had forgotten more of war than it had ever learnt. German statesmen and strategians found that they had not learnt one quarter of what the war *à outrance* that they had prated of, meant. They who had thought of a three months' bully, found a four-years' war before them, and when their magnificent fleet only half man-handled and miraculously saved from annihilation returned after Jutland to port to use their own expression, 'a mass of scrap iron', they had had their belly full.

We should not forget how their people spat on their prisoners of war and ill-treated them, how the people in the streets spat on the wounded . . . though to the honour of their medical men be it said they treated the wounded well once they had them in hospital . . . how they murdered poor Captain Fryer, how they shot foolish, heroic Edith Cavell, and how the Belgian atrocities were



largely true and fully documented. . . . let us remember, so that the Blond Beast side of the German character and its Hun element shall not be entirely forgotten. Crimes may be forgiven. It is well not to *forget* them lest they happen again.

#### POST-WAR GERMANY

But what of Post-War Germany, while hysterical David Lloyd George, with his nerves ajar, was shouting "Hang the Kaiser, and make Germany pay to the uttermost farthing?" Whom was he hoodwinking and hypnotizing? Himself? his own people, after that day at Downing Street when the soldiers marched below his windows and he turned a Kerenski colour? Or was he humbugging the Allies so that they Lost the Peace after Winning the War?

When Germany had her back to the wall of her own building, heroic enough and facing her unexpected misery—and now salving her conscience, by claiming to have held her own against the world in arms, despite the fact that she had made it so—far-seeing folk realised that a nation of that size cannot go into the last ditch, and expect to recover. Germany fought for a year too long with 'all out'. With every resource exhausted, and none so poor to do her reverence, she had not a dog's chance of returning to prosperity yet, and Eric Geddes shouted 'squeeze Germany till the pips squeak!'

No peace they saw could be so serious for her as to fight to a snarling finish, with no resources left on which to rebuild. Because that was so, she is in her present plight, a plight which when Hitlerism leaves her as poor as when it started will once more be patent, even if she have better heart to face it!

When the world lent her money hoping against hope to conjure reparations thereby, it did not, it could not lend her enough. The millions of dead in the world had destroyed vast markets. Nor has she apparently spent



her loaned money rightly or wisely. She has turned her cities into gardens at the world's expense, a work-giving, revolution-begging expedient, only justifiable if she did it at no more cost than a life-preserving dole. And she is as badly off as ever!

What of the Weimar Republic? What of the happy young Germany we read of, of Germany turning from war, to her old simple goodness? What of the happy bands of *Wander-vögel*, and *Jugend-bewegen*, and all that we were so inclined to enthuse over a few years back? Now and again, when the British talked and said Germany had learnt her lesson, and would now enter the bond of nations and join in the world's progress, some hard-faced man in the corner, some weather-beaten survivor of the trenches sucking a pipe that sang as he sucked, would say gruffly, as he removed the said instrument from his lips, "The Bosche is always the Bosche."

Was he right? Is the good German *in esse* still the Blond Beast *in posse*, or is the rougher side of Hitlerism, the Jew-baiting, the unrestrained murder of those who disagree, merely a temporary hysteria? Is it but the same wild hysteria that made Hindu and Moslem neighbours slay each other at Cawnpore two years ago; Hindus to tear Moslem children asunder, cut unborn babes from Moslem mothers' wombs, and slice off their breasts in their fury? Are Hitler atrocities but the nerves of a people gone agley as some also say? Some there were who said that the Belgian atrocities were but the nerves of a folk unused to war, seeing foes behind every bush; of a civilian army frightened by their imaginations and fierce discipline of the permanent cadre. It may be so. Maybe Hitler atrocities are but nerves, and that it is not true that "The Bosche is always the Bosche."

However that may be, it is true—even after we remember those long lines of French refugees before the Beast, the women and the children, the halt and the maim, the mothers

and the children, *un qui marche, un qui tette, un qui vient*, that the French rightly and naturally resent so bitterly—that the iron has entered into the German soul. She has paid for her crime a hundred-fold. France who has seen her country desecrated twice in fifty years by the Blond Beast, France whose young manhood was poured out like water, England who sacrificed a million of her finest, America who lost her hundreds of thousands to please her own public who expected it . . . have been avenged.

The German regular officers who drank to *Der Tag* almost all died in their tracks or remain maimed. The class from which they sprang and the little *ratts*, all fell into such abject poverty when the bottom fell out of the Mark that we need hate them no more. The starved children of the war-time substitutes are now the nervy supporters of the Hitler revival. The French Black Troops and the occupation of the Ruhr on the one hand, the belief, natural enough, on the other, that the Bosche was playing the cad over reparations, have left a bitterness that has overlaid the first instincts of a prostrate Germany to re-create herself on human lines devoid of hatred. That perhaps was an aspiration beyond her, but what ever it was, the Ruhr, in popular language 'tore it'.

That France, knowing how ruthless had been the German plans for her humbling and for divesting her of all her wealth, had the latter been victorious, was, not unnaturally, severe, is equally intelligible. It is but the pity of it that we who have not suffered and endured equally, cannot feel and shudder at it. France found, too, that, economically speaking, blood could not be got from a stone, as indeed have all those who have attempted to get reparations from a vanquished people who had died in the last ditch of their resources.

Alas! To spoil all fair thinking, the insidious suggestion whose truth no one could prove even to this day, came into all minds, "Germany can d——d well pay if she

chooses. She is kidding." Even the bigger men could not realise that the world pays its debts in goods, and if those goods are not wanted then the debts cannot be paid. Yet when we deal with international finance of these great magnified days, there is no expert who can tell where truth lies. Eh, Sirs! But the problem passes the wit of man!

How, devoid of false sentiment, unctious, and anything save humanity and thought for the future, Germany should be treated, will be discussed anon.

#### THE EXCISION OF RUSSIA FROM THE BODY CORPORATE

The world is a complicated machine, and Europe alone still more so. To say that is but to repeat the feeblest platitude, were it not that in discussing the world's troubles we often forget it. Russia with its hundred millions of nominal Europeans, its great Siberian possessions, its trans-continental railways, its stately church with its contribution to Christian happiness, has been suddenly torn from its anchorings. A mighty limb, something more than arm and shoulder has been torn from the world's figure, and yet we go about our business and pretend it hasn't happened, or what is worse, forget. Can a figure so mutilated live on in its pristine strength and prosperity?

By her mad folly and her Tartar Jew cruelty, Russia has suffered not only the great war weakening that came to all, but her mad leaders have cheered as she destroyed the inherited acquired capital of generations. If it has been almost impossible for Germany to re-establish herself after her last-ditch attitude, it is worse for this country a hundred fold.

It is also a commonplace to say that the world is so inextricably interwoven that a stone thrown into one pond ripples all the other ponds. In the process of liquidating inter-belligerent pre-war business relations, an

immense amount of that wealth which is expressed as credit, vanished. In liquidating Russian liabilities and trading concerns millions more have vanished into thin air. The falling out of the race, even for a generation, of this great limb of commerce and civilization, has disturbed the balance of the whole world; the stench of the rotting limb fouls half the business offices. How can the world so struck expect to go on as before. No wonder that economists want to see Russia restored, if only a little, to the world's uses.

Even the mad little minds of our Labourites, who like to intoxicate their own kindly mentality with visions of dead and tortured aristocracy and 'burjoos', are right enough in theory. If they would purge themselves of the hypocrisy which makes them praise the butchers of Moscow, and execrate the far milder Hitler thumbscrews, then even they, by devious ways, would have arrived at a right conclusion. Russia must be restored. Indeed if she would refrain from stirring every cesspool from Dublin to Calcutta in which she smells an anti-British effluvium, this country would go some way to assist in the restoration.

Oh! If people would only know their great simple gullible John Bull, if a memory of the fable of the contest between the North Wind and the Sun to strip a man of his cloak would stir them, how John could be made to dance! A little slobbering, a little breath of hot-air and he would be all over them. Had the Indian Congress been clever enough to play their fish, India with brass nobbs would have been handed them. But this simple John Bull, so easily humbugged, stiffens up to opposition. Russia has played her cards atrociously. But the upshot of it is that unpurged of all her blood guilt, she stands both militarily and economically as the enemy of the world, as one of the main factors that prevent the lion and the lamb taking tea together; and the War God's sabre rattles therefore.

## THE FAR EAST

The world of the West might, it has been said, take to quieter ways were not the problems of the Far East too complicated. China, with its four hundred million worthy folks, has, like Russia, torn her ancient fabric that could have been mended and re-hung, into a thousand pieces; into a 'hundred thousand Chinese Crinkum Crankum's' as the old nursery rhyme has it. The clever young students from America naturally enough cannot yet throw up leaders with power behind them to hammer the Chinese War Lords into some sense of decency and order.<sup>1</sup> It cannot make an Empire that is effective, even if it can overcome the desire of its inner soul to play a crooked game of diplomacy.

Therefore, it is the playground of intriguing powers, whose legitimate trade is terribly hampered. In this medley honest John Bull has tried to play a straight game, and too often a quixotic one while in the hot-air mood that succeeded the world's armistice. To make gestures that bring British unemployment in their train is not what we send our members to Parliament for. Unfortunately we have been bluffed time and again, and it is common knowledge in the Far East, that a tricky hostile United States, or at any rate her citizens, have played a very doubtful game.

The future of China and the competition for markets may, at any time, produce very difficult situations. The British have always wanted to make the most of Chinese trade not by giving the Chinese what they can give themselves, but what they cannot, in return for the commodities that China can produce for them. Other powers' nationals have not been so straightforward, but what all want is a peaceful China to pursue their ends in, whether they be

<sup>1</sup> There are three Chinese armies and three Chinese navies in existence.

good or, whether they be evil. A healthy, strong, reasonable China as what we ourselves want to see building.

The story of Japan is otherwise. For reasons largely economic, mixed up with the dead hand of the past, she must have room to trade and to colonize. Although during the last few years Chinese themselves have poured into Manchuria which men now call Manchukuo, there is plenty of room for more. Japan intends to find an outlet here. China herself has no reasonable grounds to object. She has driven forth her Manchus, let Manchuria under Japan's guidance be a separate protected Kingdom! China cannot put down brigandage, Japan can and will. If the Japanese like to put Henry Pu Yi, the late Emperor of China, on the throne of Manchukuo, there is none to say them nay. We who have done the same on smaller lines and rebuilt Egypt and other states, should be the last to object.

But while China, with her modernised and doubtful army always short of essentials, is not likely to pursue the Manchurian question further, Japan and the Soviets have much to quarrel over. There the War God is almost out of his carriage. If the Soviets leave the Japanese alone Manchuria will be settled on reasonable and human lines! If she and Russia go to war, as they easily might, it will be the duty of the powers to isolate the struggle.

Since Japan has left the League, the latter is not invited to interfere, while the attitude of the League, the Lytton Report, and all that is said and done, have started from the assumption that China can keep her engagements either in fact or in intention. They start with a camouflaged conception of the Nanking Government, a Government of a riven China, as being the modern Government that can preserve law and order and deliver the goods as per sealed bond. Till that comes to pass—and it is small blame to the most able Chinese Government, if it finds itself a long way from such a position—Japan will play a lone hand, and be a partner in any war's alarms. But since she keeps the

Soviets and the United States guessing, there be many who as is said in another chapter, will say "Thank God for Japan," as others just referred to say "Thank God for France!"

But there are many who think that in deserting our old Japanese allies, at the dictation of polyglot America we have let down not only old friends, whose position as islanders so resembles our own, but our own best interests. It is not too late to repair this error.



## CHAPTER II

### THE CAUSES OF WAR

Wars and their Origin—The World's Old Wars—War and Economics—The War that was to End War—The Harsh Words of France.

#### WARS AND THEIR ORIGINS

BEFORE we look further at the world to-day and its war fear, let us loiter a while among origins, for the causes of wars and the origins of quarrels provide one of the saddest and yet the most informing of studies. How old is war and even the modern science of war the historical books of the Old Testament tell us. The wisdom of the Serpent that relates thereto, is like almost everything else in that astounding Book, the oldest of facts and the latest of truths. Even the modern art of war and its aftermath, are there as they have existed since before time was.

Do you want the very inner germ of the practice of strategy it is there, when one king with his five thousand, plans how he can oppose another with ten. The tactics of the attack and the bewildering of the enemy were as known to Gibeon as to Foch and Haig, and when you come to the aftermath consult the wisdom of Ben Sirah. 'There are three things that grieve me and the fourth maketh my heart sad . . . and the first is a man of war that is in poverty'—the two 'P's' of post-war, Poverty and Poppyday.

When we come to examine the causes, which we must do if we are to steer our bark through the seas of peace, we shall see that apart from the vagaries of the few, the loves



of princesses, the whims of monsters, the causes are much the same. They are based on economics and economic laws. Even the great world-compellers and storm-riders fought for their people as well as for their own fame, their own wealth, or their own aggrandisement, for without a prosperous and a wealthy people only the world's monsters could hope to prosper themselves.

Unfortunately so many of the causes have their roots far down in the beds of time. Alsace, for instance, long a duchy of the Holy Roman Empire and German Empire, fell into the hands of France so far back as the years of the Grand Monarque between 1648 and 1697. So it remained despite the victories of Marlborough and Eugene, despite the humbling of France in 1814, despite the tableau of the Hundred Days of '15, all occasions where an adjustment if urgently needed and claimed could have been made. Its reversion to the Germany of 1814 and 1815, while permissible as a penalty to the conquered, was obviously not looked on as a right, nor a burning need for a re-union with a parent stock, however unrighteously Louis XIV may have acquired it originally; and so in 1871.

Lorraine, too, was a Duchy of the Empire till 1736, when it was granted to Stanislaus Leszinski, the ex-king of Poland, brother-in-law of the king of France. At his death in 1766 it was, agreeably to treaty, incorporated with France, so that when it returned to Germany in 1871, here also there was no burning cry for racial re-union and self-determination. So this age-old bone of contention and cause of war dates, even in modern controversy, from close on two hundred years ago. The severing of these provinces in 1871 from the parent stock in France was among the very definite causes of the late war.

On the other hand we must think a little with Germany, who could but remember how the French had rattled their sabres prior to 1870, and how France sixty or seventy years earlier had wantonly torn Europe to pieces for her

own end. But if we take a far greater leap back over the gaps of time and history, we may think of the great blond beasts from savage Danubia and the Northern provinces of what is now Germania, pouring into civilized Roman Gaul, as the Roman Empire itself, mighty, stately, age-old Rome, wilted and faded in the world's empire markets.

So when you call 'new wars for old', it is only Rome versus the Blond Beast once again, and if truth be told no man knows how to stop it. Hence it is that the League of Nations, after fifteen ineffective years, is fain to confess that it knows even less than the old folk of the main-springs of war. The spectacle of Hitler preaching war and the war spirit to his youth, as the way to regeneration and the sanctification of the spirit, is worthy of a country whose Emperor referred to the Deity as 'our good old God!' He of Germania! It is a soul phenomenon to which allusion will be made hereafter, but it does show how the war fervour and the war spirit can be stirred in a Christian people.

#### THE WORLD'S OLD WARS

We may look with profit on some of the world's old wars and we shall see how often economics or the political side of economics, brought them into being. The devastating struggles that threw Europe back, compared with Britain, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries happily have some causes that cannot happen again, but others alas! are well woven into the warp and weft of human nature. The terrible Thirty Years War, the outcome of the Reformation, the struggles of the Church of Rome to regain its ascendancy, and the fury of Austria and its Hapsburg German Emperor, cannot happen again.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless we must realise that it was not the religious aspect alone that induced the war, but the incompatibility in race and disposition of the North

<sup>1</sup> This was written before Catholic Hitler commenced to tear Protestant Germany into pieces.

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and South German peoples. They fought after such scenes as the "Defenestration of Prague", *anglice* "chucking 'em out of the window", as to whether or no a state might chose a ruler unacceptable to the Holy Roman Emperor.

The War of the Spanish Succession, the war that brought Marlborough to his zenith, was fought on what was really the 'balance of power.' The whole of Europe was determined that by no sort of happening should the crown of France the great land power, and that of Spain the great sea power be united. Here was the balance of power added to economics. France and Spain in unison meant good-bye for ever to many sources of English and Dutch trade. There was also a good Austrian claimant. Since loss of trade means starvation, the governments of the countries involved, knowing their main duty better than some to-day, fought; fought for their nation's right to trade, and by this war came into being the British Empire, literally founded by Louis XIV.

It was in these days, be it incidentally remarked that the term John Bull first saw the light as the name for the Englishman. The world, especially the English world, was one of political pamphlets and lampoons. When all the pother about the Spanish Succession, which does not concern us here, was at its height, Arbuthnot wrote his *History of John Bull*. Old Lord Strutt (Spain) lay dying and his neighbours and servants assembled with measuring stick and inkhorn to divide his property; Lewis Baboon (France) his neighbour, John Bull (England) his tailor, and Nicholas Frog (Holland) his runaway servant. From this obscure lampoon developed that majestic, good-humoured imperturbable emanation John Bull, whose latter-day figure is set forth in the frontispiece to this book. However, that is another story.

Let us see why the Crimea broke out, when unprepared, disarmed Britain had as usual, to bear the brunt. Many historians find it hard to say why it occurred, but curiously

enough it had some origin as a war of religious dispute, a dispute and a quarrel which remains in some sense to this day. The Orthodox Church (Greek) and the Latin Church (Rome) both demanded the care and custodianship of the Holy Places in Palestine. Russia backed the Greek claims, and in view of the large number of Christians of the Greek Church in the Turkish Empire, put forward her own claims to be their special guardian.

But for many years now France had been pleased to pose as the protectorate of Christians, especially all those odd churches in Syria and elsewhere in communion with the Church of Rome, a claim and a desire not without its humorous aspects. From this eventually rose a quarrel between the Powers which ended in the Turkish War, and which owed a good deal of its origin to Britain taking an entirely sentimental view of the possibility of Ottoman Turkey to come again and reform herself. There was a great Congress at Vienna, something like a League of Nations, assembled in 1853 to prevent war! It resulted in the horrors of Varna and the miseries of the first unorganized winter in the Crimea. Incidentally, be it remarked, because the fact is ignored, the said miseries were largely due to the destruction by a phenomenal storm, of the British store ships, that had arrived, but had not yet been unloaded.

It is a curious fact that the question of the Spanish Succession brought on deadly war again between France and Spain in our own time. Up till 1866 when the German King beat the Austrian Emperor and founded the new German Empire, it was the Emperor of the French, who thought he led Europe in military prestige, he who had the Crimea and Syria and Magenta behind him, who created the war atmosphere. He now sensed a rival, and when there was the candidature of a Hohenzollern Prince for the crown of Spain, all France was up in arms.

The candidature was withdrawn, but Napoleon demanded an assurance that it should never be renewed. This Germany refused, and the world now knows that Prince Bismarck, the man of blood and iron and guile, believing, as perhaps Germany in 1914, that war was inevitable and that now was the time to make it, induced it by publishing a doctored telegram from the King of Prussia to himself.<sup>1</sup> This doctored message sent the French war mad, and made them seem the aggressor, and the clamourer for war. Thence the Franco-German War, *La Guerre de mille huit cents soixant-dix*, as the French call it, the wreck of the neo-Napoleonic military bubble on the rock of want of organization and the laying of the train for the World War. There we see the past that is so hard to get away from, even in this Year of Grace, 1934. Still do dead men's hands hold us down, and none to clear the hamper.

The Egyptian War of 1882, was undertaken at bottom, because it was right and fair to all Europe who had lent Egypt money, that Egypt should be put into such a state of order and competency as should save her from bankruptcy. The security or stratego-economic need of Britain's route to the East was a secondary object. Britain, as France drew back, but belled the cat for the general benefit of Europe and civilization, and as it proved, the untold prosperity of the Egyptian people.

#### WARS AND ECONOMICS

It has just been suggested that economics in one form or another has been the cause of most wars, but naturally the pressure of population has been at the bottom of most such troubles. That *les enfants poussent toujours*, is sheer practical truth. The great settlements and migrations of the world have been due either to pressure of increasing population, or to change of conditions and continental

<sup>1</sup> The 'Ems' telegram.

climates, that have set the nations trekking with very little ruth towards those who stood in their way.

Far reaching have been the repercussions of some of these treks and invasions. It is on record in the archives of St. Albans that herrings were selling 52 for a penny in the East of England in the earlier years of the thirteenth century because owing to the invasions of North Germany by the Huns from Asia, no one was coming to buy the produce of the British herring fisheries . . . how old and yet how new!

The instances of this clash of economics in some shape in the past, could fill many pages, but when we come to modern times, we see that the pressure can become a hundredfold more serious. Since the world will not turn to the salvation of universal free trade, even Britain has had to turn from the policy which had served so many of her interests well. Every country is trying to keep out its neighbour's goods if by any chance it can produce them itself, but is equally anxious to sell to its neighbours—a paradox! No subsidy seems too big to pay to bolster up or foster an industry that cannot stand by itself under local conditions.

The mere stoppage of foreign coal orders to ourselves is, in itself, enough to send this country demanding ingress at the point of the bayonet. Fashions alone and a change therein may send a people starving. When the women of Europe ceased to need fringe nets and took to simple ways of tiring their heads, 200,000 women of Japan went a-starving and for a while could find no other means of livelihood than hair-net-making for the West.

Over fifty million Japanese crowded on islands little bigger than our own, must export or starve. Yet their exporting is driving others to starvation whose trade and livelihood they filch. There is more real and natural basis of war in Japan's export policy quite apart from the dishonest side of her faked trade marks and the exasperation induced thereby, than in all the vapourings of western war lords of the past.

Because of the land hunger of Japan, and because Australia can't or won't fill her spaces, we have had to make the great naval base at Singapore, as an outward and visible sign that there must be no rough stuff so far as we are concerned in the Far East. Little Socialists who don't even know enough of the world's mainsprings to see where their own bread comes from, cavil, but common sense pressed on with the work, the wiser of the Dominion Governments contributing thereto, lest worse befall.

When to save ourselves we put a tax on French intensively cultivated fruit and vegetables, we have destroyed the livelihood, or reduced unduly the circumstances, of those who for half a century we have encouraged to cater for our markets. Is it to be wondered at that the guild of *Pertinax* should foster enmity? To urge our folk to winter in England and spend their diminished income at Home, is perfectly good and fair, but it has reduced many folk elsewhere to beggary, and these sores in one form or another are where the war bitterness is engendered and whence unconsciously Chancelleries and General Staffs draw their inspirations.<sup>1</sup>

To go off the gold standard was for Britain a life-saving act, but it at once killed many pursuits. Who would buy the goods of a country with an appreciated currency. On the other hand, this act of self-preservation immediately gave British goods a lift in the world's market.

In fact, it cannot be disguised that the old saying "What's one man's meat is another man's poison" is terribly true in international affairs. It was this truth that stimulated the Cobdenite Free-trader in the hope that all the world would follow. It was wise, observing, old Lord Cromer, who said that apart from the actual merits and demerits of protection and free trade from a British point of view, it was abundantly clear to him that the world

<sup>1</sup> Since the above was written we have seen France reduce our quotas, British duties raised in reprisal, and France threatening the denouncement of agreements of long standing as a counter reprisal. Such way rises bad blood.



acquiesced in our dominating world occupation because "we were the best tenants," and our policy of open doors was a world policy. "Protect yourselves," he said . . . I paraphrase his words uttered before the World War . . . "protect yourselves if it seems good to you, and you think your free trade era has served its turn, but I would have you count the cost, your armament will cost you more, for the world's dislike will increase."

Positions and values have so changed that the actual pith of his warning may have passed and be no longer current coin, but the general economic sense of what he was driving at holds for all time. Economics, food, the right to live, are the danger factors in this teaming world, for whom the blood-letting of the millions whose lives went in the War, has hardly relieved the strain at all. The destruction of values was out of all proportion to the destruction of life so far as the world's economics are concerned. Further, have the world's wombs instinctively increased their activity to fill the losses . . . and "hence", in the words of the old indelicate tag, "the Pyramids".

At the present moment, though we have hardly yet recognised it, the fierce subsidization of foreign shipping to the ruin of our own, and all that the "Red Duster" stands for in our national economic life and make up, is likely to put this country in a war mood. For the moment that mood is likely to take some form of reprisals or a return to something in the spirit if not in the manner of the old Navigation Acts which protected our hard-earned carrying trade, till change of times has made them out of date and unnecessary.

But the experience of history is that old cycles come round, and a re-enactment may alone save us. It is absurd, for instance, that our own old obsolete shipping should be bought up and then with its failure in economical capacity covered by subsidy, and on the top of that its freights lowered by further subsidy, destroy our own carriers.



Surely this is a little more than flesh and blood is likely to bear with equanimity. *Get animal est tres mechant, quand on l'attaque il se defend.*

It is common knowledge that in the past when Germany's war might was considerable, it has been hinted by German diplomatists that any attempt of Britain to protect her ports from free entry, and to abandon her free trade policy might in itself be a *casus belli*. Well has it been said that economics are the true basis of all wars; in civilization, as in savagery, it is the empty belly that unsheaths the sword, however much disguised with other overlay.

#### THE WAR THAT WAS TO END WAR

Countless of the young men, at any rate of this group of Nations of the British Commonwealth, went to the War inspired by the thought that they were fighting 'the war that was to end war.' Whether Mr. Lloyd George and others of the public men of the day believed that, or whether they were merely trying attractive and stimulating slogans, is neither here nor there. Twelve million men in their prime lost their lives, of high and low degree, white and coloured, Eastern and Western, and here, fifteen years after that conclusion, sabres have rattled and not for the first time, even if more noisily.

The civilized world is sick of it. What are they to do? The first answer is that judging by the past of this very old and Christian world—this world which in its main doings is actuated, officially, formally, and in the hearts of its citizens, by the principles at least, of the Decalogue—if not by the Sermon on the Mount—at some time and in some form war is ineradicable. If there is any truth in there being an evil motive as well as a good at work, if the theory of sin original or otherwise is based on any foundation, then war on earth is one of the conditions of the Fall.

The second answer is that if there is any truth in Christ's redemption of the World then humanity must and can find some road. The League of Nations, the combination of all men of goodwill to mitigate quarrels, can be the only way. Come let us reason together. But perhaps that League or Concert must be organised on more practical lines than at present—over sixty nations big and small but reproduce the sort of democracy that leads to fascism. What we need is a Big Five or Great Eight or whatever the number shall be, who shall agree among themselves that war is their undoing, and that the lesser folk must follow suit. It sounds so easy. In practice it is so difficult, and the four great 'buts' are appalling, and these be they . . .

The United States would not join out of contrariness.  
Germany has left from dudgeon.

Japan has gone because of hot air in the League pipe.

Italy condemns the league because it frothes, and cannot impress the world. . . .

Who will put it right?

#### THE HARSH WORDS OF FRANCE

France herself, even in this post-war period, has done her best, in some sense to diminish harmony, and diminished harmony is one of the ways to war conditions. Had not the Briton been extraordinarily phlegmatic, and also too busy with his own affairs he might easily have been stirred to great wrath by the prolonged ungracious, nay unworthy, attack of the French Press on everything British of a few years back. Perhaps it was but the waning of the honeymoon, and perhaps Britain has instinctively realised this. Perhaps British failure to fully realise all that German invasion had done to France piqued her.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Now we have Sir Ian Hamilton telling us how the German proletariat like the British for their good behaviour while occupying German soil. So different from the French. Quite so. Atkins is always the gentleman, but . . . Atkins had not seen a large part of his own country treated as Germany, ruthless, arrogant Germany, treated France. It does make a difference.

Whatever it was, hostility, bitter, cynical and unabashed was the note of a considerable portion of the French Press. Perhaps the common sense of the French and English peoples, after their four years of intimate sacrifice, was proof against the making of bad blood. But it is not unfair to say that judging by the behaviour of her Press, perhaps a very false guide, France did her best to kill the innate friendship which the camaraderie of the common front had engendered.

Fortunately apparently, despite many cold shoulderings of English folk in France, it was realised that it was but 'pretty Fanny's way', and that she would be better presently.

Curiously enough after the Crimean War, and a period of fraternization and camaraderie in the field that had a very glorious side—of fraternization of the two peoples behind the line, of interchanges of royal visits and the like—a very few years saw an intensely anti-British wave arise. So much so that it cost Britain many millions sterling in war preparation. The costly great fortresses, now obsolete, that surround Portsmouth on the land side, the long line of redoubts on the North Downs that now house chickens so admirably, were the results of the rattling of the sabres of the 'French colonels'. From it indeed rose the Second Volunteer Force (that of 1859) as distinct from the earlier re-action to the Napoleonic threats that gave rise to the Volunteers of sixty years earlier. It was this phenomenon that gave cause for the *Punch* cartoon of 1859, the frontispiece hereto which so rightly intimates our proper course to-day.

If I might suggest to these gentry of the French pen, who perhaps cherish an inferiority complex that the most of their countrymen do not share, why not let John Bull alone. He is sound at heart in his French sympathy, and he remembers Mademoiselle from Armentières and all she stood for very heartily. It is great fun for Petinax and Co. to be sarcastic, it does not go very far into the hide of John, but it does annoy those who lead public opinion in our own

Press. There are plenty of French who know John well; all those French Liaison officers who took to English boots and gaiters and even talked of that 'd—d French Army' when they went to see their own folk, know that that liaison was pretty complete even when the ways of Atkins and Jean Baptiste differed.

It must be very long before Britain and France can think of each other with hostility, but all who remember want penman and politician not to dim the friendship. Hard economics do that enough without words on top of it. Don't make bad blood Gentlemen of the French pen! And think of the day when the British 'fall in' rang out on Havre jetty, and that forest of masts and smoke stacks from India sent Marseilles, beside itself with excitement, in those wonderful days beyond recall.

## CHAPTER III

### THE WORLD TO-DAY AND ITS WAR FACTORS

War and the World Depression—England and France—The Legacies of Versailles—Russia in 1934—The Polish Corridor—The Lesser War Factors of Europe—The New Germany—German Re-Armament—German Colonies—The Anschluss—Japan, Britain and the Far East—The United States of 1933.

#### WAR AND THE WORLD DEPRESSION

If the rising generations of all nations will take the trouble to understand what came to the world in 1914, they may perhaps bear better with their present troubles. Even with these on their shoulders, life has numerous amenities which those who lived in prosperous early '14 did not know.

It is now twenty years since that most prosperous opening of 1914. Trade was booming, not only in these Islands but in the world. Our own unemployed were then fewer than for many years. The Insurance Act had been introduced not as a universal measure, or as glorified poor law, but to help those trades which by reason of custom or climate ran slack for certain months of the year. The humanities were steadily at work, and all the movements of modern uplift were well established.

And then came this terrible outbreak of disease, this world famine, cholera, and earthquake combined, which we call War. We are apt to forget that in addition to destroying millions of established producers, and consumers, we also destroyed the accumulated savings of several centuries and euchred those of many generations to come.

Since the prosperity of the world is measured in credit rather than cash, we destroyed immense amounts of credit that can only be re-established in generations. The majority of the things that we make and produce, on which we lavish material and labour, are normally destined to last a period.

The world's production can only see its way to amortize such articles, to cater for wear and tear and a fair period of life for the article in question. But when you take a million horses that should serve your needs for ten years and be slowly amortized, and slay them forthwith, you have destroyed your savings ten times faster than your machinery of production can face. Your battleships are normally gauged to last you perhaps twenty years, and you sink them, five million pounds and more in steel and copper, in a night. You then affect surprise that your world finance is wrong.

So this great civilized world went mad and destroyed its property in its frenzy, its property that it had so laboriously accumulated, its property that it so badly needed for its everyday life, its houses, its roads, and its fields. The worst day's work that the world can do itself is to destroy its property and its life at a greater rate than it is framed to stand. We can cater for our annual loss by premature disease if it maintains its average and accustomed rate. We can rebuild our houses if loss by fire and earthquake does not exceed a normal rate. But when that rate is accentuated, greatly accentuated, then is the world terribly unbalanced.

Many of those who spent public money freely in the course of their duty were obsessed with the horror of it. The kindly fruits of the earth poured into high explosive that would vanish in the twinkling of an eye, the great plough horses that should last a decade, cast away on lands that did not even want their bones, and the ships that sank in a night.

Seeing these things we saw in our mind's eye the long years of economy, of humble dingy economy, that the world would have to go through, that the world's innocent children would have to put up with. We expected to see the world forced to the simpler living, to years of doing without things as our fathers did, to years of rather old trains and buses and motor cars, to years of the churches we knew, the missions that we could support. Not a bit of it! The world, the peace-mad world, was not only mad to forget the mud and the death and the dread of the war fronts; that we could understand; but was mad also for everyone else to have a better time than they had ever had before; to act, in fact, as if they had just inherited a fortune rather than just lost one.

In the process of making a world fit for heroes, who were amply rewarded with the mere fact of life, and who only wanted the right to eat the plainest bread and butter, the whole world of passive resisters, of new-born babes and young men at school all wanted the world more luxurious. Having lost all our own money, we then proceeded to borrow all we could, to have better villas, more gramophones, wireless that we never could afford before, cars that we don't pay for, heaters in every room, countless new joy-roads, whose only possible purpose could be to destroy the millions of capital wrapped up in the railroads.

You have had airways that no one wanted, to destroy your shipping capital, and still more pull down your railways, and so forth. Can the whole world be surprised that disaster has followed jazz? Is the world fitter for heroes and all the other Welsh and American blather?

The living on 'tick', permissible perhaps when the world is expanding and the tickers have no possible set-back ahead, is a very disastrous matter when the world shuts up, and each constituent part bumps back against the lender behind, like the trucks on a luggage train that checks in its course.



People of any social status, and with the usual credit among tradesmen that those of such status enjoy, can live on tick for a while. You may have cars, clothes, sumptuous furniture, guns, garden implements and everything that a stores catalogue includes. You may have them all, without any cash, and you can get away with it perhaps for two years, and then the flood. Nations have got away with it for ten years, and then the bill has been presented, with the bailiffs behind it. Is it a wonder that the world is in the hands of the receiver?

The foregoing is the practical observer's summary of the world's present condition, only to be escaped from long and steady climbing ahead, and not to be avoided by any *leger de main* of exchange and gold-price trick-work, or short cuts whatever.

From it all as we now see, emanate many of the fresher causes of ill-will, controversy, trade barriers, quotas and all the trouble they bring in their train, besides the earlier ones of the War debts.

#### ENGLAND AND FRANCE

There is no country so devoid of sentiment in the lesser sense of the word, in her public affairs, than France across the sea. She knows exactly what she wants and sees that she gets it. No one should know this better than the English, who ruled half France till recent times, and whose morioned Atkins were just as at home in the *estaminets* in the days of the Black Prince, and parleywood as strangely, as in the years just past. But it pleases us to forget it.

Twice in fifty years has the Blond Beast marched far into France, and in so doing torn the countryside to pieces. France has no intention of having it so again. The fact that she in the past had done exactly the same in the earlier generations do not matter to her. Only



the mad English could look at facts that way. France knows that had England put her foot down, had she come out into the open, and said she would side with France, there would have been no war at the moment in '14. It is perfectly clear to *us* on the other hand, that our Government would have had difficulty in saying so.

For several generations now, the hot-air politician has so perverted our people and their judgment, that they could not have led England into an open threat to Germany of this nature. May be that is true and right, and there has always been the 'yaller streak' in our people, and it is to those that the appeal has too often been made. France knows how much the British opinion can play weathercock; how prone our leaders are, not to lead, but to follow. Had we been men enough to enter into a definite Alliance with France after the World War, for a period of years, a period not too long, but one during which our people could have held to an idea and an ideal, France would have disarmed.

But France knows something of her England and the Lansbury bleat. She knew that the weathercock would turn, and she must be strong herself against her neighbour beast. Therefore it is that France has an Army and an Air Force that can for the present hold her frontiers. For this too as just remarked, many there be who will say, thank God for France! Thank God for someone who has a stronger diet than the hot air aforesaid!

Even when our Government favoured an alliance of re-assurance, it would not take the step without the United States. But the United States had withdrawn across the Herring Pond, and had forgotten their lip-service to Lafayette.

We hardly realise how a definite policy on our part, and even how little of it, can make for peace. It has been said, and probably rightly so, that even had the Territorial Force been liable to serve out of England in 1914, Germany would not have made war. But Britain, talked at for close

on a century by romancers, could not think hard. The Music Hall motto "Defence not Defiance" appealed mightily to the man who would not face facts, and the leader who would not tell him.

Haldane no doubt had his tongue in his cheek when he framed the Warrant and Charter of that original Territorial Force, feeling that if he made the Army, some bolder man might use it effectively. In England, in addition to the tiny regular spear head of six divisions and six cavalry brigades in 1914,<sup>1</sup> were fourteen more divisions and fourteen cavalry brigades of this Landwehr of ours, with the same organization and principles as the Army, that *could not* be used abroad.

Lord Kitchener has been accused of not using the Territorial Force that was ready to his hand. But it was not ready by liability. No hasty law could make it so, and it took the best part of a year to get it ready. That is how the British incompleteness of thought, the endeavour of the bigger statesmen to prepare, for an inevitable war without frightening their countrymen—who preferred keeping their heads in the sand—caught us and humanity when the crisis came.

It all explains how hard France finds it to take an unstirred England seriously, and how since the Armistice there has been a growing feeling that she must trust to herself alone. On the other hand, the anti-British propaganda in France a few years ago, just referred to, may easily be one of the underlying instinctive causes for our reluctance to guarantee France save under such conditions as those of Locarno.

Or again a far older instinctive feeling is that of the Balance of Power, the traditional British policy. This policy is no doubt one of the conditions inherent in our position in the world, and may draw us unconsciously away from any alliance. Nevertheless, bad after-manners

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Chapter IX for details.

are to be deplored on both sides, and it was quite impossible for us to expect France to disarm unless we were prepared to give her an out-and-out guarantee for at least ten years. That we and our Dominions could not or would not do so, is one of the tragedies that underlie the present position.

#### THE LEGACIES OF VERSAILLES

The framers of the world peace aimed at doing away with war in the World, or at least in Europe. Long before the termination of that drawn-out assembly in Paris, it must have been borne in on them how futile was their task, how little could they command the future or understand the constituents of at any rate southern Europe. It may even have been borne in on them that perhaps the Austrian Empire was the only condition that squared the circle whose sectors were so variant.

How every statesman must have cursed the egregious Wilson and his dangerous if magnetic catchwords, his fourteen points, and his self-determination, and all the fissiparous tendencies that such ideas would call forth. Even perhaps the President of the United States, the Prince of Hot-air Merchants, realised before he had finished that it was one thing to summon spirits from the deep and quite another to put them back again.

They have succeeded between them in arousing an intense spirit of nationality, when the converse was their aim, so that every nation and people, to combat the lean wolf hunger, are building round themselves customs walls that none can climb, and glare across them at their neighbours. We have the spectacle not only of each country trying to be self-supporting, which may have its merits, but of each and all trying to sell to its neighbour without buying, to acquire wealth thereby without earning it, to export without importing, which is a physical impossibility for long. In so doing are the germs laid of a war not

for power and dominion, but for the very right to live, and down below the war god is furbishing his arms because the world is mad.

But the framers of the Versailles Treaty did not envisage its permanency in detail. Modification might follow. To endeavour to weave a garment that would last, but whose cut could be altered, they formed the League of Nations. How good and how bad has been the development of that child is what the world now is quarrelling over. But the more we study the matter, however much we may join the groans, and whatever road we may follow, all lead to Geneva. The League in some form is the only alternative to chaos, even if half the world secede for a while.

Most difficult and most pressing is the problem of the Saar. There it lies between Lorraine and Luxemburg, rich in second-rate coal that suits French iron industry, with fifteen million pounds sterling of French capital invested therein. It has, as all the world knows been placed under the League till 1935. Then must the League cause a plebiscite to be taken as to its wishes and take measures to see that its voting is absolutely untrammelled.<sup>1</sup> At the moment every sort of Nazi interference is already reported with gross intimidation so that the League may have to apply to the Allies for support. Britain cannot stand out unless it is to wash its hands of the Treaty and let who will repudiate their obligations. That way stands chaos, and yet here again we see the horns of a dilemma.

It is in some ways the most difficult of the legacies of Versailles, and carries in its solution as many war germs as any other of the post-war items.

#### RUSSIA IN 1934

The excision of Russia from the body corporate of the World has been alluded to. What of this Holy Russia

<sup>1</sup> Even then the League's will is by the treaty paramount.

that will be infidel, this thirty-fourth year of the twentieth century, and seventeenth of her martyrdom? And the answer is what of it? Her Five Year Plan has failed. It was bound to fail in its purpose, even if successful, because the civilized world would never have allowed its industries to be swamped, and its peoples livelihood destroyed, by the acceptance of Russian slave-made goods.

Here and there an open door to discipline the world's profiteers perhaps, but otherwise the door of Russian export trade will be kept shut by the strongest spring that the world knows; its own right to live on something better than herrings' heads. And yet there were folk in England running about open-mouthed about it. The world's secret solved!

But even if the Plan had a bottom that would not fall out, is it to be expected that inefficient Nitchivo Slavs would run first-class up-to-date factories, and keep them running even with the knout and the Cheka in reserve. While foreign engineers can erect splendid establishments, Russians seem able neither to select suitable places for them, where terrain and communications make them a practical proposition, nor can slave managers get them or keep them, going. The nightmare of sabotage accusations alone must destroy much of their initiative.

An exporter, except of those of her natural products that the world wants, she cannot really expect to be. Those nations who take her timber for instance, should be able to make a condition that her logging camps shall be properly organised, and that no convict-produced material shall be admitted save at non-convict price, and that convicts' camps shall be humanely run. We make fuss enough about inhumanely treated beef, and we certainly should not tolerate goods produced as it is believed they are produced in certain parts of Russia.

Assuming that Russia's productive power can overcome the mentality that dumps a complete Ford Factory in

the sands of Nijni Novgorod—this the biggest undertaking of the Plan, the Molotoff Automobile Factory, which was to make 140,000 cars a year, and it is closed—What then? As the plan of this factory was to turn out parts only to be assembled at four other factories in various parts of Russia, a place of railway access would have seemed to the business mind as essential. Not so to the Russ. From Nijni runs only one line, and that but goes to Moscow. The factory is not even on the Volga, and the Volga is only open to navigation in summer, and so it goes on. Mass factories; mass dairies for the workers, but no milk! mass butcheries for them also, but no meat!

Assuming, however, that the factories can work, can we imagine the world allowing itself to be swamped with slave-made cars?

This perhaps brings us to the greatest danger of all to a peaceful Europe. If the second Five Year Plan is to fail as badly as the first, the Russian propagandist will have no difficulty in explaining to his people that it is Capitalist Europe that stands in their way, and in creating a *furore* for war. The Red Army is a big one, and though it cannot escape the congenital inefficiency that seems innate in the Russian character, it is probably in many ways superior to the old Tsarist Army. Indeed its very existence, to the writer's mind, is the best argument for permitting a considerable amount of German re-armament.

Fortunately for Europe at the present juncture, Japan is keeping that Army busy, and a-watching far into the East. There are many who will say 'Thank God for Japan!'

But it is not inconceivable that Stalin himself also says the same. There is more likelihood of the Saviour of Russia coming from the Army than from elsewhere.

And now comes from Russia another source of irritation. She has had the impertinence to erect so powerful a wireless station at Moscow, that she can jam the rest of the

world, and then pour out to the world's listeners her obscene Bolshevik propaganda in many tongues. Such action comes perilously near an act of war, calling for air action to destroy the pirate station.

Yet all the world wants its old human trade with Russia back. The world cannot really recover its prosperity with so large a limb lopped from its commercial life. It has been prepared to go very far from good business methods to restart the trade, but dumping is where we come to the place called 'Stop.' At present, even among our lesser communists, there are none so poor to say "*Thank God for Russia*"!

#### THE POLISH CORRIDOR

The Polish Corridor, as is Poland herself, is the special child of France ever since Stanislaus Lescinski married the daughter of Louis XV. True, Napoleon I, in spite of his huge and valuable Polish contingent, did little enough for her when he made the Peace of Tilsit with the Tsar Nicholas. But after the World War Poland was to live again. To give Poland the access to the Baltic, we have had this long riven strip of German territory given to her, and we have seen that it cuts off a definite body of Germans from contact with the country to which they still belong. The population is mixed, for as in Upper Silesia, the Pole is in the countryside, the German, the intelligentsia, is in the towns.

There is no more dangerous legacy in the whole of the Versailles Testament than this matter of the Corridor, for however necessary to give Poland a port you cannot do so for long by a method that contravenes every law of economy and common sense. Danzig, as we know, the German town on the Baltic, has been made into a Free City. But because she hated the Poles and all their works, she refused, giving the charter of a Free City as the reason,



to allow munitions of war to be landed for Poland during the agony of her war with Soviet Russia.

As a *riposte* to this Poland has made a new port for herself at Gdynia on the western coast of the bay of Danzig, and connected it with Polish Silesia by a new line of rail. Since before the war the peoples of what is now Poland drew their supplies from many ports both east and west of Danzig, but since the War it has all concentrated in the Corridor. Danzig stood to gain immensely, and at first did so. But now her attitude in inducing the construction of Gdynia is robbing her of all her trade, and she is proportionately distressed and angry therefore and thereby.

Then Upper Silesia, given to Poland by the Plebiscite, whose genuineness had to be covered by British bayonets, is a third grievance, and a deep seated one. The Corridor and the Polish Policy, therefore, involve the three points, viz. the separation of East Prussia, in which landlords are Prussian and Protestant, and the people Poles and Roman Catholics, the troubles of Danzig and the grievance of Silesia. These be the points which demand the League's best attention. The recent German Polish agreement may indeed indicate something more than a *mariage de convenance*, and may make the League's work easier. Indeed, until this was signed it was no exaggeration to say that exasperation on the Silesian Frontier made it so far as an outbreak goes, one of the danger points of the world.

It has been said that it is the Corridor, which every school map shows as a different colour cutting off a large limb of the Reich, which is the most tangible of the blows that the Peace has delivered, and the one whose remembrance rankles the most and lives the most vividly in German minds. It will tax the League's powers to settle this question peacefully, unless Germany adheres faithfully to Locarno and her new pact with Poland.



## THE LESSER WAR FACTORS OF EUROPE

But there are the lesser fleas on the back of European unity which cannot be neglected, and which can again only be put right by the League or else the peace of Europe cannot be insured.

Prominent among these are the grievances of those Hungarians who have been assigned to Roumania, grievances which Lord Rothermere has striven to get understood, and which Count Bethlen, a former Hungarian Premier, recently has been at some trouble to explain in this country. Apparently a very severe persecution is in progress to de-Hungarianize the transferred folk. Apart from its general wisdom, it is but fair to say that a transfer of territory long in one hand to another for so-called racial reasons is bound to carry great injustices. We see it ourselves in the grievances of Irish loyalists, and especially of the ex-Imperial soldier, and we may be sure that it is worse in Central Europe where public opinion is not so potent a machine.

Another trouble that is again not unconnected with Poland is the fact that a large number of Ukrainians are included in the modern Poland. The Ukraine itself is perhaps the most vital spot. It is not Russia proper, and it has on paper the right to secede from the U.S.S.R., a right that it would gladly exercise if it dare. But it is one of the Eastern Europe factors that make any explosion there hard to localise.

## THE NEW GERMANY

In considering the war dangers of the moment there is no denying the attitude of Germany as producing the fear of possible war, even if there are ultimately others more serious.

We have looked on the pre-war Germany, and poured due meed of contempt and horror on her. We have looked

at the post-war Germany with the eye of sympathy. We should perhaps like to be *wander-vögal* ourselves, and the *Jugend-bewegen* is after all our hearts, a question for statesmen and humanitarians, and those who love God's world, who love the *hari-jans*, as Gandhi has called untouchables of India, a word that but means 'God's creatures'. What is the real truth of the Hitler furore? Was Germany groaning under the unspeakable burden of the world's contempt; was her want of armaments eating into the daily pride of every Aryan soul? Is she at her wit's end because she had mismanaged her peace, or is it that the world's depression has borne more heavily on her moral bankruptcy—if she was bankrupt in that side—as well as in her material life?

There are some shrewd folk who say that since the War, Germany, her integrity guaranteed by the powers, was free from all the expenditure on armaments for sixteen years, and was thrice lucky therefore. "Lucky Germany," they say, "what in God's name, are you grouching about?"

There is very material truth in this shrewd point of view. It should have been exactly what a bankrupt nation needed, after all she has gone through, "sixteen years the burden of defence borne by others, while you pull yourself together, and now you make a grievance of it!"

But let us assume that the Germans really were morally down and out, and that their young folk were heart-broken, then by all means let us help save these good people because we are well aware of all that we love and respect in the German character. Granted that we are still puzzled at the baiting of the Jew-boy, is it true that by their machinations the Jewish folk, whether Semite or flat-nosed from Russia, had so wormed themselves into all the affairs and bureaus of a Nordic people that it could no longer be borne?

If that be really the case, we should but sympathise. Here we do not let our Jews dominate us. We sweat them.

They attract the underground gold streams. They can make money where others cannot, and employ many blond Nordic British in so doing. Are we really supercrafty in that matter? Perhaps we are. *Perfide Albion! Perfide Albion!* Now and again we put them up to defeat the Teuton '*Der Alte Jude dass ist der man*', as Bismarck said after the Congress of Vienna. It has been said that countries get the Jews they deserve. Here in England we are apt to think that a little Jewish strain . . . a little . . . in one's ancestry is invaluable to one's personal make up. We even boast of it.

The quest of Aryan ancestry that has seized Hitlerstan, is remarkable. The clergy are to be strictly searched in their marriage relations. The German Church, or at any rate a considerable portion of it, is not only planning to root out all Old Testament teaching, though surely the Maccabees, "Them old MacCibes, the shtout auld Pratestants", as the Ulster farmer called them, should appeal to Nordicism.

The man of super-logical and enquiring mind, is tempted to say "My dear Herr Hitler, Hail! regenerate your Germany, and all fortune go with you, but what are you doing with the Tartar blood that for long has made some of your Prussians so execrated by the rest of Germany a generation ago? Are they of the true fold? And if you like Tartar blood as a form of the true Nordic, if Uighurs, the Ogres of the Grimms' Tales and Hans Andersen, appeal to you, surely you won't bar the real Russian Jew, whose Tartar forbears turned to Judaism when other Tartars turned to Islam. Is the almond-eye, the high cheek bone, the tendency to rise to a point in the skull, to be barred?" But of course it is never kind and nice to be too logical.

The trouble that at present seems heavy in the land is what to do about The Christ, who it appears was of Jewish birth. Cannot our German scholars ascertain that that is a mistake, and that He came from a Danubian

tribe? The suggestion that British Israelites make, that Saxon or Sachsen is really Isaacson, is scandalous. Root that out and find that Jesus came of Nordic stock, and Germany will be Christian; otherwise there may even be talk of Wodin and Thor!

But putting aside all these points, and remembering that humour was never a strong German point, we may realise that what we find so strange, and so bombastic, is only the scum rising from the great brew, and when it has ceased to rise we shall find a good Germany below, refined . . . the furnace for silver, the refining pot for gold . . . and ready to look the hard times still before her in the face.

Then if Hitler can survive the disappointment which is bound to rise when it is patent that the Nordic revival does not mean work for all, and having affronted all the Jewish interests, diverted the gold stream, and upset his ecclesiastics then we shall have to think very seriously as to how the victors and signatories of the Treaty of Versailles are to treat Germany.

Is she to be free to arm and disarm with the rest of the world? Is she to be free to start the great preparations for revenge if she so chooses, and bring about again that horror which unfortunately is losing its sharpness in human memories. God forbid!<sup>1</sup>

She has begun to voice demands for her colonies back. Is that demand to be scouted, and not even studied, even if we remember that she bought the evacuation of her territories and her entrance into the League of Nations by accepting and signing voluntarily enough, the Treaty of Locarno, which re-affirmed Versailles?

The foregoing envisages a not unreasonable Germany, but asking for more equality in the world and a bigger share in its advancement. How far that is the real Germany

<sup>1</sup> The British disarmament proposals issued after the above was written, are referred to later.

is hard to say. It is not the real Hitler as revealed by himself, as the next few pages will show.

#### GERMAN RE-ARMAMENT

The Germany of 1914 and the Germany of the Post-war period have been outlined, more or less as the world has seen them even before the incarnation of Hitler. But the practical problem is the Germany of to-day, the problem of this great nation, repentant or otherwise. We need not deal further with the manifestations, the flowers of the disease on the surface. What are we going to do with the real Germany, with its enthusiastic disappointed young people, with this sixty-five million folk, of immense energies and dynamic possibilities, who will not, or who cannot proceed along the road that has been shown them.

When the froth-blowers have blown away the froth, the Jew-baiting, the dealing with the dangerous side of Communism, and we get down again to the hard facts of a people with wide unemployment, little credit and great ambitions. We may perhaps assume that a chastened, wiser Hitlerism, of which there are already signs, will prevail.

On the other hand we cannot let ourselves forget Hitler's own revelation of his dreams as revealed in *Meine Kämpfe*, of which book a million are said to have been sold in Germany. The translated edition for British consumption, had some sixty per cent of its matter expurgated. Here Hitler reveals himself not as the man who would restore German self-respect, but as the arch apostle of a doctrine of war, of destruction and colonization of France, of a programme of *Deutschland über Alles*, far in excess of the earlier conception of that National song.

If Hitler still holds by this, and every day that he talks hopefully of peace, he talks the same night of war, then we are heading for that renewed struggle that civilization had believed was impossible. We see a presentiment of

a Germany with hidden factories, plans for new destroying agencies with disease-germs, of a frightfulness that would make even the Blonde Beast pale. There is no manner or shadow of possible doubt, that the storm troops, brown-shirts, etc., are receiving far more military training than necessary for national character building. What will France, Britain and Italy do about it if the situation continues so to develop?

The only real question between ourselves and the late Allies, principally France, is are we going to allow Germany to increase her army legally and to repress illegality? She has now an authorised standing Army of 100,000 long service men. It is probably nearly as good as our own, less, as in 1914, that admirable round-the-world service which gives our officers and men such incomparable confidence. France is in some difficulty how to envisage the matter. She does not like this *Reichswehr* of 100,000 men. All to her eyes are potential instructors to the Nation in arms. On the other hand the proviso that the *Reichswehr* shall be a long service force, is born of the world experience and especially that of France in 1814. When France smashed, in 1806, the magnificent façade of an army descended of the great Frederick, the emasculated Prussia was condemned to a small Army, and in the busy years that followed, the rate at which Prussia passed her soldiers through the ranks, short service armies being then a new thing, was not noticed. In the eight years between Jena and Leipsic, the mobilizable strength of Prussia, with simple musket training, was very large compared with her standing armies. It thus helped very considerably in the hounding of Napoleon to his doom, and the putting of France back within her boundaries.

If Germany is allowed to increase her standing Army of 100,000 long service to 300,000 short service men, it is not hard to see that her mobilizable strength will be very considerable, and well over a million. Besides this

we have all such adjuncts as Nazi storm troops, etc. Add to this German air-mindness which the nature of the country engenders, and you have a very serious situation, with Germany appealing at every turn to the God of Battles. You begin to get back to the conception of Europe in Arms, and all that appertains thereto. What sort of armed force is another matter, but we may be sure that Germany would make out her quota after careful thought of what armaments should be.

But Germany stands with her small army surrounded by France, Belgium, Poland, Russia, Czecho-Slovakia, all armed heavily. Is it right for the world to have this vacuum, and how long can it before, under Locarno, we endeavour to prevent the inrush?

As has been said, Europe is on the horns of a dilemma, and Statesmanship has a hard task before it. It is not therefore surprising that Sir John Simon's duty was to talk pretty straight to Germany at the Disarmament Conference, even at the risk of sending her out of the room in a huff. This inconsequent country, or a vocative section of it, must needs blame him when every voice should have backed him because he faced facts, and would not play the role of the sentiment monger.

Since then we have seen the December discussions, and Hitler's attempts to get France away from the League and a joint front with Britain, and France's common sense refusing to deal alone. But the danger is as hitherto, Britain's two voices, and France's fear that if she can trust this British Government to be staunch, she is very doubtful about the next.

One point stands out from those behind the scenes, and that is that at this moment Germany could not put up a military force fit to support her pretensions, and that she must for the present proceed warily. The world therefore has time to think again and it is here that hope for peace really lies.

What lies on the other side of the screen? We have seen the *obverse*, let us now gaze on the *reverse*. First as already suggested, Germany reasonably armed is needed as Europe's screen against a madder Russia, the Russia alluded to with her second Five Year Plan a failure, when she may run amuck, or with her Five Year Plan successful when she must have her markets curbed. Perhaps even we might say, as suggested, "Thank God for Hitler!" Add to this that the Communism is a very real danger in Europe, when bellies are empty and the future blank.

Here in England we have few of the real sour communists, the kind concerning whom instinct teaches Hitler the truth of Shakespeare's aphorism "stone dead hath no fellow." But even our good British form of communist, such as we have, with out Maxtons and what-nots will probably learn a lesson from German ideas on the subject. In the back of the hall for this also perhaps we may sense the echoes saying "Thank God for Hitler!"

#### GERMANY AND COLONIES

Her colonies have been taken from Germany. *Vae Victis!* And the opinion of the world is that she richly deserved to lose them. Under the old rules of War, there was no quarter to those who held an untenable post. You have no right to cause loss of life when you cannot possibly win. Similarly, if you involve the world in a war and lose then you are 'for it', and Germany, as explained, has been 'for it', as she would have served her opponents, but less cruelly so.

There is no getting away from the brutal rules of tit for tat, and woe to those who first loose the dogs of war. To prevent the Allies quarrelling over the spoils, some clever mind invented the 'mandate' and the responsibility to the League of Nations. This alone is enough to plant the League firmly in the soil of civilization. Even were



the League to die, is it competent to make a will, and if not, what then?

Germany's colonies have been taken from her on two grounds, the comprehensive one of *vae victis*, aforesaid, and secondly on the grounds that so 'bloody minded' a race are not fit to have 'native' races under them. That is of course true, and lest we forget it, Hitlerdom has reminded the world of that very bloody-mindedness we were forgetting. But having come to this comfortable conclusion, we find the old dilemma raising its horns to us. As you cannot get blood from a stone and reparations from a bankrupt, so you cannot leave a country of sixty-five millions and wombs that know their business, without somewhere to expand to, amid a host of oversea neighbours.

What colonies can you give her that are of practical use, and which mandatory is to disgorge, or hand over its irksome task? It would hardly be suitable to give her Palestine which has married Britain apparently for all time. The main objection, almost the vital one, of giving her German East again is that this particular area produces African soldiers of considerable efficiency, who took very kindly to German military methods, and were somewhat hypnotised thereby.

The world does not want Germany put to the tension of such a temptation with the memories of black troops in the Ruhr to stimulate it. The world's peace demands that Germany shall not have authority over a black race of martial proclivities. But again the old 'German East' alone has territories fit for settlement in large numbers.

All of which, however true, does not simplify the problem. And it may be said that with a hundred good reasons why no particular colony should be restored, yet wisdom, and the natural law that deals with quarts and pint bottles will keep this question alive. Without a League of Nations cutting more ice than the present one, it is impossible to

handle this problem at all. Yet the want of German colonies is undoubtedly one of the disturbing factors of the future.

#### THE ANSCHLUS

Away behind the scenes also is what is usually spoken of as the '*Anschluss*', by which is meant the political union of Austria and Germany, another facet of Pan-Germanism. It does not appeal particularly to the German population of Austria except as a counsel of despair, as the only way out for a bankrupt Austria vis-à-vis a prosperous Germany. It has a new appearance, however, with the rise of the Nazi form of nationalism in Austria, and if Dr. Dolfus cannot continue to stand up to it, may become a proposition that has to be faced. There is nothing more likely to draw the sabres from the scabbards and set the guns shooting. It is probably the one thing that Europe would not stand, and would send a reluctant France, who would rather ring her rifle butts on the flags than shoulder them, marching across the Rhine once more.<sup>1</sup>

In fact the very thought of it makes the politicians wish they had listened to the soldiers and marched to Berlin, or listened to those even wiser folk who had recommended the breaking up of Germany. That takes us in to problems beyond the scope of this book, but the point remains 'Beware the Anschluss!'; and preserve the Balance of Power.

#### JAPAN, BRITAIN AND THE FAR EAST

In Chapter I a brief reference has been made to Japan and the Far East, but the subject must be explored somewhat further as one of the disturbing factors of the world.

<sup>1</sup> Since the above was written, we have had the February rebellion in Austria and we hear of Britain, France and Italy being ready to say 'Hands off Austria'!

First we may pause to regret again our refusal, when the big minds that were left after the World War were too hard pressed to think seriously, to renew our Alliance with Japan, our Island twin of the East. That Alliance meant a good deal to Japan, more indeed than to ourselves in a military sense, but a great deal in a commercial sense. To Japan it meant, and no one knew it more than the thinking Japanese, her great guarantee before the civilised and respectable world.

To be an Ally of England is more than to be a member of the League of Nations. We abandoned our friend and also War Ally for the sake of that will of the wisp, American Friendship, that plant which talk the English-American never so friendly, will not grow profusely in our garden. Not that our Alliance with Japan need clash with the tending of that plant, but rather go to a restraining of American and Japanese clash. With Japan our Ally as before, we had something to bargain with in this matter of cut-throat trade, something to talk with when we wanted patience over Manchuria.

In spite of the opinion of the more important portion of the British people we would not renew, though we could probably have done so on the easiest terms. No doubt our politicians thought that public opinion would not face the thought of any entanglement, but they did not try to educate it. We stood out, and the peace of the world, our own position in the Far East is not the better therefore, and Singapore becomes a more essential item than ever in our protective system. Now to make matters worse our Labour busybodies, whose exaggerated importance in the telegraphic news may sometimes mislead the world, urged that we threaten war to get Japan out of Manchuria.

Japan left to herself, and knowing from inside the futility of trying to do useful business with the phantom of China, has helped herself, exactly as we have done in the past,

when derelict children of the world needed adoption. Japan craving, like ourselves, for expansion, driven by the prolificness of her people to seek expanse, will find it in Manchuria. Her task is more complicated than ten years ago by reason of the strange influx of Chinese. But this vast country twice as big as France, will give her room to expand and trade for many years.

We may even say 'thank God for Japan' again, not only because she can keep Russia and the United States guessing, as already said, but because with this outlet for her population and her energies, she will not be the anxiety vis-à-vis an empty Australia that she might otherwise have proved. The banditti of Manchuria she will in time put an end to, and in due course she will make the protected kingdom of Manchukuo a great success, which China could not have done. The League of Nations would have been wiser to have given her a mandate.

We may also feel that as we have refused her alliance we may be glad that her hands will be full for a century, and the world the better therefore. Had we been her Ally we might have made terms with her as regards British trade to Manchuria.

As a war factor, it is her devastating trade competition that is more likely to bring a clash. We have lost our power to influence this save by restrictive regulation and taxation, the which will be a potent creator of bad blood on all sides, although of the moment some agreements have been happily arrived at. As matters now are, this trade penetration—which from a world's point of view is grossly unfair penetration—is a more than unfriendly gesture. It is us, her former Ally, that the danger threatens most. The only bright spot is that the hard pressure of Japan will do more to kill the interest and hysteria with which the cotton merchants of Bombay at one time welcomed the Gandhi venom, than anything else that has happened lately.

It would almost seem that the British Israelite has something of truth in his belief, so often is harmful action turned aside from us, and become our shield!

But apart from this trade trouble and all it adumbrates, the points for our renewing our old understanding with Japan are greater than ever. Our desire to be an honest friend to China would be but enhanced thereby.

So much for our twin Islands of Japan. What of China? As a war factor, there are two aspects here. One is the ancient fear that used to be written of as the 'Yellow Peril', of the possibility of this four hundred million peoples being able to organize themselves as Japan has done, and bring China's age-old wisdom and capacity away from crankums to Western ways, and becoming a mighty world power.

But Japan was a small island nation with everything in the palm of her hand, and thus a very different proposition from this vast, unwieldy China which would be better as half a dozen kingdoms than one. That danger is probably as yet remote. It cannot, however, be banished from the tablets of those whose business it is to think ahead. The second and more likely trouble is that, the Nanking Government being unable to control, the old Empire may become a seat of war needing settlement, with European jealousies as to who shall intervene producing quarrels.

It is to avoid that perhaps, that we pretend that the Government at Nanking is more effective than is really the fact, and that the older men and indeed women at the head of affairs can dominate their war Lords. But the future of China—and no one is more genuinely desirous of seeing China come happily together than ourselves—is one of the great anxieties of the future.

There are too many western interests of all kinds involved for anarchy to be readily accepted, and the policy of pretending that Nanking is China and can deliver the

civilized goods is the only one with any hope or promise. But we must not blame Japan for thinking rather harder than suits the western book.

#### THE UNITED STATES OF 1933

What of the United States? and echo answers what? Some comparatively hard things have been said in Britain of American citizens. They are nothing to what the United States have habitually allowed themselves to say of the nation from whom they have inherited and learnt most that is good and stable in their make up. The States have been going through the most tragic three years, far more pitiful than we in Merry England have any idea of. Tens of thousands of that very middle and lower middle class that make the worthy background of English-speaking countries, have been down into the very depths of misery and despair; down to depths that are lower than ever because of the black coats, the cars, the flats, and the 'room for everyone' prosperity that has preceded it.

The Cassandras who foretold what might come and what was the end of over inflation, were never listened to, and therefore the States have shipped an astounding sea. Because of all the harmless kindly folk involved, our hearts should have been very heavy for them. We are now watching the new Pilot smash the compass, throw the ballast overboard, say good-bye to his leadsmen, and even the expert hands at the wheel, and trying to bring the good ship out of a new storm in a new way. We pray for their sakes as well as the world's that he may succeed.

It is bad enough for the world to have a derelict Russia; the United States paralysed for many years will be the world's super-tragedy. Writing in Britain as the Old Year fades out, there is no certainty whether the President will 'Get away with it', or even if he does whether it will not be followed by the relapse that follows drug-taking,

and result in clamours for the needle once again. Nevertheless, as we rang out the Old Year, there were some signs of success in his empirical methods, and it will not be out of place to give Mr. Roosevelt all the wishes for 1934 that one human being can give to another.

Nor shall we altogether have the satisfaction of knowing "Well no Navy for the States yet awhile" because, here is a new law of economics that universal depression in a nation writes on the wall. It is this; when you are feeding many millions of workless people, the cost of public works, ordinarily only permissible in times of plenty, cost you merely the difference between charity maintenance and industrial rates. Therefore Mr. Swanson's new cruisers can now be had on the cheap. The same of course applies with even more force in Britain, whose new cruisers and planes expectant will get a big contribution from unemployment funds.

The Far Eastern peace is always tinged by the fact that the States have rightly or wrongly a very jealous eye on Japan and the old envy of the open door in China. The best way to have handled that would have been for them to come into the League and help keep Japan there. The situation in the Far East may require a League of its own in which China, Japan, Britain and the States strive to keep the situation reasonable.

The astounding position of the United States in military aircraft, in civil planes, and in aviation mileage, due of course to vast distances and favourable climate, and what under adverse circumstances this might adumbrate to all her neighbours, will be treated of in a separate chapter. The States in 1934 are a strange factor in the world's cosmos.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND LOCARNO

The League of Nations—The Road to Locarno—The Treaty of Locarno—What has the League Done for Britain?—The League's Failure and Future—The League of Nations Union.

#### THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

LONG ago when the world was younger, and the story of the Cross more vivid in men's minds, when there was but one Christianity and one paganism, a great ecclesiastical mind, or perhaps a group thereof, achieved a grand idea. No less than reviving the long-lost Empire of Rome as an Empire of God, in a glorious union of Church and State which should keep the world sane and whole. In the year 800 Charles the son of Pepin, the Charlemagne of history, came to Rome to receive at the hands of Pope Leo III coronation as the Emperor and temporal leader of all those over whom the Pontifex Maximus, the Pope of Rome, held spiritual dominion, and whom he had long essayed to unite against the peril of Islam.

For a while this resuscitation of the temporal power at Rome was the equal of Bagdad, of Cordova, and of Byzantium, and a worthy successor to the very Rome. But the Holy Roman Empire was not to be established so easily. Charles' sons could not wield the sceptre of their mighty father, world-compeller and storm rider. It was not till a century and a half later that the Holy Roman Empire as known to European History came to be formed under Otto I in 965. It was indeed not till twenty years



later under Otto III, that the world saw the famous *Sacerdotum et Regnum* formed, that great partnership of vision and enthusiasm.

The Holy Roman Empire sought to unite Church and State and weld the princes of the world into one federation, the Emperor to control worldly matters with the Pope, the Păpă, the Father of Rome, at his side ordering the matters and ritual of God's Kingdom here on earth. One Church, One State—*Sacerdotum et Regnum*—unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, unto God the things that are God's . . . under the joint and inseparable fraternity of Emperor and Pope. Wars were to cease, except a righteous war blessed by Rome, and we see, as the great principle went agley, Norman William, desirous of the land of the English Harold, getting a Papal Bull to entitle him to commit so great an offence within the *Reich* as the invasion of Christian folk.

What a wonderful conception it was, and how soon human frailty and folly made it unworkable! And then comes to the world one Woodrow Wilson, the professor from a Yankee university with the same task to do. And the world for a while tried to conform, and here in Britain where we slobber over good ideas and Gandhi's even more than elsewhere, we tried<sup>2</sup> very earnestly to make it so. The League of Nations with its constitutions and its irrefutable axioms has been duly set up, but it bids fair to fail in its major task. Countries are too great and their interests too varied perhaps to submit to so cramping a control. No longer as the memory of war grows fainter does *timor mortis conturbat me*. The necessity for avoiding war at almost any costs, has been forgotten.

Perhaps we have all sent our cranks there rather than our statesmen. Perhaps we have fed the League, or the League has fed itself on too much hot air. Japan has left it because that body would insist on pretending that four hundred million disrupted Chinese were a nation, with a

Government that either wanted to deliver goods, or was competent to do it, even if it was desirous of so doing. Japan who lives alongside the great sham façade knew, and the League tried to thwart her. Japan left.

Germany has left the League. Why? Probably because as a sovereign nation she could not submit to be heckled for the more glaring of her Hitlerisms, and her pride regarding armaments formed a reasonable excuse. As for the country that produced Woodrow Wilson, it absolutely refused to touch the matter.

The defection of these two active members of the League, the failure of many nations to pay their share of the cost, and perhaps the folly of the League itself in allowing its giant establishments and in launching forth into bricks and mortar in a Palace of Peace at Geneva when all the world is bankrupt, have brought the League low in the world's estimation, so low indeed that Italy also talks of leaving. The fact that the United States has never joined it, has also diminished its effectiveness. What is to be done about it? It passes man's wit to devise for the moment.

The British League of Nations Union is backed by too many of the hot-air merchants to have much prestige with the harder side of British people, but Britain is not likely to let the League go if she can help it. A humbler and less sensational role than an attempted super-*reich* lies before it. The glaring inconsistencies which time has shown in the Peace Treaties, and the bitter feelings they engender, merit the League's earnest activities. That way dies the will to war. Put those right, and the disarmaments may follow. Its secondary activities, the confounding of the drug barons, the hunting of the white-slavers and suchlike international police activities are alone worth the League's cost.

That it could ever act as a great world compeller always seemed to men of knowledge as beyond human possibility. The belief that it could do so emanated from those of whom

it has been said that while 'their hearts were full of gold, their heads were full of feathers.' What is the remedy? Dock fifty per cent. of its establishment and tell it to get on with treaty revision and its international police activities, is the remedy that some practical people have suggested, and behind it a "Four Power Pact."

Had it aimed less high and interfered less in things that were out of its reach, Germany and Japan would not have left it. If it can keep going on somewhat lesser lines it may yet some day, as the world recovers, rise to that position of *Sacerdotum et Regnum* which its early visionaries hoped for.

To sing its epitaph Benito Mussolini, Duce of Italy and the two Sicilies, with his penchant for higher grade journalism, writes:<sup>1</sup>

"The existence of the League of Nations is at stake. Even in the days in which there was at least the appearance of harmony, it was hard to get any important decision from the Geneva gathering. The Grand Fascist Council has cast the dice. Either the League is reformed or it is bound to perish. The reform idea will prevail because there is probably no reason why the lesser states shall not prefer a League handled by the four European Powers that matter."

Even if we don't admit that Grand Fascism is yet the last word in civilization, nevertheless these are straight and significant words.

To make it all easier hear the good Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States, speaking at the Woodrow Wilson Foundation dinner on the 28th of December, 1933:

"Political profit, personal prestige and national aggrandisement, attended the birth of the League of Nations, and handicapped it from its infancy." That is that, but it does not help, and may be compared with the same President's views on a big Navy and his Naval Secretary's enunciation

<sup>1</sup> *Sunday Dispatch* special article December 31st, 1933.

thereof during the last year.<sup>1</sup> Presumably he refers to the motives that prompted Wilson.

The opinion that the United States themselves killed the League by the bad obstetrics at the time of birth if not by abandoning their child by the wayside, has perhaps provoked this obviously unstatesmanlike and demagogic pronouncement. The trouble in the world is that chats that are meant to help the middle West digest its dinner, are cabled to the breakfast tables of Europe, and count as diplomacy. In the days of less open diplomacy, these views remained within the four walls of the bathroom and did a little less harm.

That also, however, is by the way. To see that without an effective League, the West must fall to chaos, let us glance at the road to Locarno, and see how that Treaty re-sets the framework of the new civilization to which a league is essential.

#### THE ROAD TO LOCARNO

The story of the League and its high endeavours, however well known to us in general, may conveniently be outlined. Is it commonplace to remark that the Treaty of Versailles that was drawn up when all the victors were bent on 'squeezing Germany till the pips squeaked'; on meting out punishment to the conquered; not the measures which the vanquished in war may naturally have to undergo, but definite punishment for the infamous manner in which they had all allowed their troops to behave. The senuous impressions of the battlefield were vividly before them.

France realised, however, that her ancient enemy, crushed under heel at last, was bound to become again a relentless enemy seeking *revanche* as eagerly as France had done, and that in the long run the more numerous population would prevail. Therefore to France a League of Nations which really meant something was very much to be desired.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter V.

It is not too much to say that France has used all her influence and devoted all her aims towards making the League a living bulwark to herself.

In 1919 and 1922, Britain would have made the defensive alliance that France wanted, but only if the United States were to be a party. Since both the States and our Dominions demurred, the plan for alliance fell through, and to that fact we owe the present armament position. In the meantime France had allowed her Press to start her quite unjustifiable and extremely foolish campaign of vilifying Britain and all her works, till her hotel-keepers lifted up their voices and wept.

Later, the 'Protocol' of 1924 was drawn up by the League, in which there was to be a force at the disposal of the League for enforcing its decisions. The British Navy was to be the principal constituent, thereby recognising what had long been an unrecorded fact; but that fell through. The principal Dominions were not prepared to assume the proposed role; and our own men in the street looked askance.

And it is to be remembered that during these years there had been much recrimination between Germany and the Allies and much bitter feeling. The Allies, in their very natural desire for the thrice over-due reparations, had forgotten the simple rule that payments between countries can only be made by commodities. Germany could only pay in goods and except coal for France, nobody wanted her productions. Germany, because she could not pay all, or anything like all, her reparations, believed not unnaturally that her failures would be put down to recalcitrancy and that she would not be believed. This turned her sulky and insolent, with the result of the occupation of the Ruhr by France (1923-24).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The story of France and her natural bitterness and of Germany and her disillusionment and aspirations is very truly and sympathetically told by Sir Percival Gibbs in his novel, *The Cross of Peace*, and it explains all that the younger generation need know.

With the proposals for Alliance and the Protocol both dead, the first regrettably, the second naturally, we come to Locarno, at which it is now the fashion to look askance.

#### THE TREATY OF LOCARNO

On the scare that followed Germany's departure from the League, the less responsible portion of the British Press has taken upon themselves to cry out against this Treaty of Locarno, urging that it binds us to war, that it is unfavourable to ourselves, that it is one-sided and everything else that is bad and unsuitable for an Island Power. Sir Austen Chamberlain, during December '33 has described the whole of this engagement and all it stands for in the pages of the *Daily Telegraph*. There was no one better qualified to do it, and it may be said that that is the last word on the subject.

What in brief is this Locarno? It is a treaty to which after infinite discussion and lobbying as to other alternatives, Germany agreed with the other Powers. By it Germany *recognised again and re-affirmed her acceptance* of the Treaty of Versailles, and there was *no mention therein of any form of disarmament*, as she now is pleased to state. She promises in it that she will not seek by any means to alter the status in the West, and will only do so in the East, if ever, by the means of peace. It nailed the existing agreements to the mast. Here is a passage from an explanation of it which Sir Austen specially drew up at the time for inclusion in a dispatch to Germany.

"That Germany is prepared to guarantee voluntarily what hitherto she has accepted under the compulsion of the Treaty, that is the *status quo* in the West; that she is prepared to eliminate not merely from the West but from the East, war as an engine by which any alteration in the Treaty position is to be obtained, to be able to hold her hand altogether." Viewed from that point of view

it might almost be said by a cynic that the Treaty is not worth the paper it is written on. The only answer to this is a shrug of the shoulder, for the whole object involved is the mutual guarantee of the *status quo*, and the fact that by her *voluntary signature* the Germany of that day had renounced all ideas of revenge and reconquest.

Unfortunately the Germany of to-day *is not* the Germany of that day. As Germany has withdrawn from the League, has she renounced Locarno? If so, what are the Allies, the other contracting parties, to do about it? Obviously if Germany has gone and does also renounce she lays herself liable to forcible steps to make her keep her treaty. Obviously, too, it is desirable that we all stay in and abide by Locarno. The Kellog Pact does not matter in the least, it was really only a redundant attempt to make the Powers re-affirm what they had already affirmed and is only valuable so long as the Powers are of that mind. Only from the America which sent out the Peace Ship would such an idea emanate. But, since it was to the interest of the civilized world to keep from war the Pact had that merit of a reminder. In fact a re-edition thereof would not be amiss.

If Germany has really left the League, the Treaty dies if the other signatories are of the same opinion. But Germany has no doubt been told and will slowly realise that she cannot leave the League, that France will never disarm unless Germany stays within it.

"Thus not only in the West but in the East, she is prepared absolutely to abandon any idea of recourse to war for the purpose of changing the treaty boundaries of Europe, though she may be unwilling to make the same renunciation of the hopes and aspirations that some day a modification may be introduced into the East as she prepared to make in regard to any modification in the West."

That was the summarized effect of the treaty so communicated to Germany to make sure that there could be no mistake.

Because of this quite definite understanding, the contracting powers signed the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee, between Germany, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Italy, Italy herself adhering later, and later again Poland and Czechoslovakia.

What are the general provisions? They are that each and all will operate against any wanton breaking thereof, but only after the League of Nations has found a case to lie. The only exception is that on the event of invasion or other openly aggressive action equivalent thereto, the signatories will act without that formality. In that case each party to the treaty undertakes to come at once to the aid of the victim.

Since a League of Nations' decision must be unanimous and the powers therein can object, there is no chance of British or any other power being brought into a struggle without her consent, while in the case of action previous to the sanction of the League in the emergency stated, she has only to demur at the classification. The diplomatic value of Locarno at this moment is that under it as its voluntary signatory Germany cannot maintain a single one of Hitler's assertions. The Treaty of Versailles was taken naturally *at the point of the bayonet*, only different in its mildness, from that which Germany had planned to inflict on her opponents. Locarno was a *voluntary treaty*, which Germany eagerly entered and there was no mention therein of disarmament. Let that be stuffed into the German pipe and smoked. So!

Also it is no bad thing to remember here, as has been mentioned earlier, that those who believed a dismemberment of the German Empire of blood and iron was the right course, may have been right. Separate the Protestant and Catholic States, let there be an Anschluss, a union



between Austria and the Catholic States, a North and a South German federation! Indeed it has yet to be seen if the Hitler conception of a Nordic Christ may not even bring that about.

Further this treaty of Locarno, as Sir Austen has shown, is more than germane to the question of the impossibility of the isolation of Britain from European politics.

#### WHAT HAS THE LEAGUE DONE FOR BRITAIN?

When we turn, however, to the tally of major work done under the aegis of the League the result is a sorry one. The only treaties of any meaning have been those of Washington and London which have but resulted in Britain dismantling her Navy below the margin of safety, 'to the edge of risk.' This too, to placate the age-old implacable hate of a small powerful clique in the States, because the latter were not pleased at Britain's naval position, a position so acutely brought home to them while bringing their own troops to France. There was no sort or possible reason other than the mentality of the vendors of tripe to listen to America in this matter, or even to meet her. Declare your intention to bring your fleet to a suitable post-war status, yes! but to tie that status to uncle Sam, well, well! Shade of Captain Broke and his Shannon.

And that is all the League has done for Britain, for Britain who has been its principal backer. The story and figures of ship and fleets and naval strengths will be discussed hereafter. On the other hand it has helped estrange us from our former Ally.

The greatest act of aggression . . . on paper . . . since the formation of the League has been the Japanese occupation of Manchuko. But there again comes the absurdity of the whole question.

The how and the why, and the miscalled perfidy of Japan have already been discussed. We have seen that the

League was powerless to stay the Island Kingdom on its course. In fact had it not been for the real friendship of the mass of the British Public for their old and war-time Ally, the sentimentalists might have got us into a state of open hostility, at a time when all the goodwill possible was needed over the trade question.

But although the League has done little for us, and has contributed to the false values in our balance sheet, still it remains the one thing that matters in Europe.

#### THE LEAGUE'S FAILURES AND FUTURE

It is obvious enough that the League as we know it for the moment has failed in its major rôle. The United States have funk'd it, thinking they knew so much more of what the world wanted than anyone else, and also nasty people have suggested, not wishing to have to answer for their steady attempts to swallow South America to be revealed before such a body. Germany has gone and we know why. Japan has gone and we also know why. Germany's defect was probably unavoidable. Japan's ought not to have been necessary had the League thought harder. Now Italy demands that the League shall be reconstituted, and put on business lines. Others demand that it shall cease to be a Society for the Propagation of Secretariats.

Yet since the League cannot manage Europe, it had perhaps better have left the East, certainly the Far East, alone. The 'Dagoes': and here I but quote from *This England*, finding that the United States are not there at the round table to be the cockshy of their probably justifiable assertions, have not paid their share of the bill. It is obvious that the League is having a very rough ride, and that if it is to go on, 'Pa' in the shape of John Bull will have to pay. Why? Because though for the present Britain has got little help out of the League yet the whole post-war structure

of the world seems to depend on its existence in some form, in a wiser and greater form, shorns of futilities.

The more the danger of war, the more the disagreements and the cause and factors of war and quarrels are studied, the more do we see that without a League civilization cannot continue. Versailles cannot be readjusted, Germany's demands cannot be cribbed and confined to what is reasonable, Poland cannot exist, Russia cannot be watched and helped back to civilization, even partial customs barriers cannot be reduced without the League as clearing house. The League's activities regarding the Drug Barons, White Slaves, infectious disease co-ordination, have never been challenged. It has already been asserted herein that they alone are 'worth the money'.

How the League is to be improved, how it is to be made more acceptable, rather more practical, and less tarred, in the opinion apparently of a large part of the world, with the tar of futility and the cult of the unattainable, will no doubt in view of The Facist Grand Committee's views, be a pressing problem. It is probable, as the Duce declares, that the greater nations, the nations who in days gone by formed the Concert of Europe, must take a more prominent share of the responsibilities rather than the unwieldy number of great and small that now have equality. A European and a world council may even be necessary with separate referenda. Its improvement brooks no delay, and happily with France and Britain standing firm as its supporters it should be possible to form an improved framework. The Four Power Pact should be a nucleus of the New League whose motto must be *resurgam*.

It is well to remind ourselves here, what is usually ignored by writers and speakers, that what Great Britain means by a League of Nations and what the rest of the world means is not the same thing. Britain means a round table where good will and camaraderie prevails and everything is above board. The rest of the world appears to look upon it as

a place where wits are sharpened and neighbours out-manceuvred.

#### THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION

If there is one body that has brought the League of Nations into disrepute in Britain, it is probably the League of Nations Union. That body founded with the entirely admirable desire to support and develop the great central clearing house of humanity, and Christian principles, has lost itself in a fog of hot air. In addition to those among its members wise of head and sound of heart, who know that a League in some form is essential, to it have hurried all those 'with the hearts of gold and brains of feathers', aforesaid, all the cranks, all the simple souls who think the world is made good by word of mouth, and that good comes by loss of power. To it also all those who would hug the miserable Ghandis to their bosoms because they abuse their own countrymen, all the nice kind old women of both sexes, and all the things that belong to a Norman Angell kingdom, and not to small islands whose future must lie outside them.

While wise talk can be heard from the Union's platforms, its kept speakers often emit the stuff which has helped us to lose many of the positions which are ours by right in the world. If the League of Nations needs reforming, so does the League of Nations Union, if it is to carry with it the opinion of the people who make England what she is. A little less of the turn-the-other-cheek complex, and the Union might rally opinion far more to the one thing that matters, viz., the essentialness of a League to which the nations who matter will adhere, and to which Germany will re-adhere in her own interests. These outside opinions of the Union are worth recapitulating if only to regret the ground that has been lost. The charming young women who speak for the Union would carry more before them if they had a slightly stancher platform.

The worst of all the futilities that hang round its back door is the proposals that millions of people shall sign a bond to take no part in any war, and the cries of the gentleman now known as 'Cripler' that a general strike should stop all signs of it. The Nit-wits! The point is not shall we go to war? but shall we expose ourselves to destruction as a sovereign power and mighty trader by living unarmed amid possible enemies? Shall we be prepared to resist the aggression that is now so easy.

Rest assured, my friends of the hot-air and tripe dietary, that your influence for good and peace depends on your power to call stop!

## CHAPTER V

### SOME PROBLEMS OF DISARMAMENT

Disarmament—French Proposals—Mr. Roosevelt Intervenes—  
Offensive and Defensive Armaments—The Thorny Question of  
Aggression—The Export of Arms and Munitions.

#### DISARMAMENT

THE alarm which first prompted this putting of principles to paper, happened, as has been said, because the good Herr Hitler, legal successor to the Blond Beast, stalked off the stage at Geneva at a little plain speaking from Sir John Simon. The conference's epitaph has been written by Benito Mussolini.<sup>1</sup> This is what he says in the article already quoted.

"The friends of total disarmament have seen their hopes buried. The efforts of the Disarmament Conference can be counted as lost, and Europe and the world must start anew if effective results are to be achieved. "The solution of the problem might originate in the reform of the League of Nations," and he produces the wise-crack that has been re-iterated here, that a League of Peace which leaves out the Powers most capable of disturbing or most likely to disturb it, is not likely to cut much ice, or words to that effect.

Let us probe a little further. For many months the Disarmament Conference of the League of Nations has been in difficulties, difficulties because it has had imposed on it an impossible task. Nor has it probably been helped

<sup>1</sup> *Sunday Dispatch*, special article, 31st December, 1933.

in its task by the election of Mr. Arthur Henderson as its chairman. Whether that selection was due to its high sense of that gentleman's services to humanity, whether it chose a Briton out of recognition of Britain's genuine attempts to promote disarmament and disinterested disarmament that she has carried out, the fact probably remains that the subject was beyond his powers to handle. Possibly no one less than the Archangel could have provided the qualities that the chairman or president required. Possibly a more innate and natural knowledge of the world and its mainsprings was postulated. The fact that Mr. Henderson in his political life has to talk to ill-informed and often jaundiced constituents, must have handicapped him considerably. That, however, is the Conference's business, since they selected him.

In Britain we can but rejoice that a man in his position should gain such a working knowledge of the world's mainsprings. If Labour in any form is to preside in this country again, it must know a good deal more of the world in which our destiny is so inseparably involved than it has hitherto been able to imbibe. It is to be imagined that Mr. Henderson now has had the opportunity to acquire a very good working knowledge. He has himself said that the world does not want to disarm; the United States hinted before it ran into the deep morass of collapse that it would lend no money and forgive no debts to a Europe that would not reform itself.

The United States, however, are a little blinded on the right side to what the left is doing. Japan perhaps left the League of Nations because the America who watches her so jealously, would not sit on that board of brotherhood. Why, as these parties say, will the world not disarm? The answer is, the answer that the universe seeks, 'because it is afraid'. Not of its neighbours, not of this state or that, but because its instincts tell it that the original evil of the world is too strong. They do not trust any neigh-

hours. They do not trust any statesman or put faith in any guarantee. They do not even understand themselves.

In the middle of it all stands France. With the ring of her rifle butts in our ears has she come to the position of waiting, armed. Whom can France trust? England, who blows hot and blows cold? Italy, who is flirting with Germany and Russia cannot agree to anything very effective, she being the apostle of controlled Force, and also it would seem more than concerned with many of the aspects of Eastern Europe? Not from her can much assistance, but a good deal of jealousy, be expected. Again can it be but repeated that France does not disarm without the guarantees that she thinks adequate. She also takes leave to remind Germany that the Geneva Conference was a disarmament and not a re-armament one.

To make it easier a number of kind and well-intentioned people, headed by Lord Allen of Hurtwood,<sup>1</sup> have put forward a proposal that Britain should draw up a disarmament scheme whereby every arm denied Germany by Versailles and Locarno should be repudiated and got rid of within five years by the rest of the Powers. That is an idea which with limitations might be considered. But the proposal is accompanied by many new rules and definitions that only if Mr. Arthur Henderson could surrender his chairmanship to the Archangel Gabriel does there seem any possibility of their being considered.

The proposal at any rate came from people whose 'hearts are full of gold'. The majority of them in some form or other have probably been before the Conference. Their final suggestion is that an amended International Law shall be embodied in all laws of all the contracting nations, so that the citizens of each nation may fairly oppose any change therein or breach thereof. The suggestion is one of fascination, but it must to some extent be dimmed by the

<sup>1</sup> This nobleman as conscientious objector, and prisoner for his principles, does not perhaps cut very much ice in a virile land.



reflection that Utopia does not mean the perfect state or the perfect world, but simply *ou Topos*,<sup>1</sup> a very different matter. Here, indeed, as in so many cases in this world, 'the best is the enemy of the good'. Whole-hoggers are rarely successful in persuading their fellows.

#### FRENCH PROPOSALS

France herself has come forward with more than one proposal and outline in the last year or so. They have been so comprehensive that critics have suggested she has done it so that the world might see how impossible it was to obtain agreement when the matter is pursued to its logical end. That is perhaps unfair, except in so far as France may be considered the apostle of clear thinking on many of the subjects on which the 'hearts of gold' launched their '*ou Topos*' ideas.

Even as this is written France is accredited with preparing the following programme:

Permanent international control of arms.

"Offensive" arms to be "parked" on neutral ground.

Defensive weapons to be gradually reduced to secure equality.

Military aircraft to be destroyed.

An international air police to be created.

Civil aviation to be internationalised.

Interdiction of the private manufacture and export of arms.

With this must also come destruction of military aircraft and creation of an international air police, and the institution of permanent international control of armaments, with automatic coercive measures against any country convicted of disregarding the arms convention. Someone has already recommended that "offensive" arms should be "parked" on neutral ground, with a view to their eventual destruction

<sup>1</sup> Nowhere.

if, at the end of two years, control has been effectively established.

There is, of course, a distinct Socialist flavour about this—Socialist in that it transcends the bounds of the practicable. Now France is also, as remarked, insistent that she will only discuss the serious problems of this nature through the League and she will not be entrapped into any definite proposals from Germany except through that medium. The correctness of this attitude can only be maintained if we British are equally strict, and if there is no separate parleyvoing going on.

Unfortunately going behind the proper authority is a modern failing, and one of which in this Empire there is a good deal, to the undoing of all principles of honest control. It is such fun to run behind local authority to the ears of secretaries of state, some of whom in such cases as India, lap up Brahmin insinuations as a cat laps milk. In this international matter unless the whole League structure is to go, it is essential to play straight and by the recognised road. It is so easy to insinuate that great Powers are going behind each other's backs, and to instil distrust.

This brings us to the dangers of the cry for 'Open Diplomacy'. The whole principles of accommodation between human beings must be run with some degree of secrecy. For instance, if France were especially intransigent over some matter, where England could not follow her, the snub public would be disastrous, but the hint delicate and diplomatic, will usually produce a change without loss of face. Even the ordinary husband has been known to use his mother-in-law to convey a hint in season without loss of dignity to the lady of his bosom.

Germany took the slap direct at the League Disarmament Conference only because diplomatic hints had not been heeded. These are really the simplicities of life and of international relations. The matter is but mentioned here because of the specious effect of the 'open diplomacy' cry,

which may influence rising generations. There are, of course points in its favour, but there is not a diplomat who does not know that in nine cases out of ten, publicity ruins bargains and accommodations, in human and international relations.

That, however, is but by the way. The interesting point is that if France is really going to put forward the proposals attributed to her, we shall see ourselves a step further on the way of getting the greatest common measure of consent. The putting of the Air on international basis has been referred to. The mind that probes further will however see that it almost involves an international air police force, nay something more, lest those who won't agree will run their own. It is here that the rub comes, because of the abnegation of nationality involved. We are getting indeed near the essence of the Protocol.

Britain was not prepared to put her Fleet at the disposal of the League of Nations. Would France offer her Air Force, and if so, would the world agree? Again one is almost inclined to say in the American metaphor, 'Meet Archangel Gabriel, the President of the Disarmament Conference.'

But out of it all something will come. Limitation of town bombing, abolition of gas, scrapping of submarines, something will be left crystallized at the bottom of the crucible, some rubies and diamonds for which the world will be simpler and better.

#### MR. ROOSEVELT TAKES A HAND

Mr. Roosevelt now takes a hand in the advisory game while stating that God's Own Country will not join the League. If Mr. Roosevelt can 'get away' with all his plans for restoring America, the world will very rightly be prepared to place a higher value on his peace nostrums than they are likely to do at present. They appear at first sight

singularly Wilsonian in their want of political acquaintance with the affairs of the outside world.

Just as the Old Year was passing he issues a pronouncement, rather by way of a New Year resolution, and which in its main issue is little more than a proposal for another Kellog pact. Whether that pact is merely bran or not remains to be seen. If, as would appear to be the case, the pact is in recognized existence, it would be simpler to run it out of the League's shed and let all the world see it and lay their hands thereon, rather than start making a replica. On the other hand, if it has been exposed by the wayside to die, the world may not be in the mood to make another.

These are Mr. Roosevelt's proposals as communicated by *Reuters* in the last days of the Old Year.

- (1) "Let every nation agree to eliminate over a short period of years, and by progressive steps, every weapon of offence in its possession, and not to create additional weapons. This does not guarantee a nation against invasion unless you implement it with the right to fortify its own border with permanent non-mobile defences; also with the right to assure itself through a continuous international inspection that its neighbours are not creating or maintaining weapons of war.
- (2) "A simple declaration that no nation will permit any of its armed forces to cross its own borders into the territory of another nation. Such an act would be regarded by humanity as an act of aggression, and therefore cause for condemnation by humanity.
- (3) "It is clear, of course, that no such general agreement would be of any value for the world unless

every nation without exception entered this agreement by solemn obligation. If, then, such an agreement is signed by the great majority of nations on the definite condition that it would be effective only when signed by all nations, it would be comparatively easy to determine which nations in this enlightened time are willing to record themselves as belonging to the small minority of mankind which still believes in the use of the sword for the invasion and attack of neighbours."

One can almost hear the old hand remarking "and wery nice too", while the cynic points out that the United States' Naval Estimates are far greater than our own, that she is about to spend 103 million pounds sterling on new vessels, that the number of her first line aircraft is the greatest in the world, as shown in the League of Nations' return, and her civil flying fleet numbers 10,000 machines. Here again are, as we have so often seen, the two voices, the voice to gull Europe, especially the blood-is-thicker-than-water British, and their Eastern-American dinner guests aforesaid, and the voice that pursues its way devoid of the popular sentimentality of the American man in the street. We know of old too, how little in such matters the President can deliver the goods of his own volition.

Just to keep our minds clear in this connection it is not unsuitable to quote Mr. Franklin Roosevelt's words of 1914 quoted by Mr. Ignatius Phayre in an article in the *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution*.<sup>1</sup> President Roosevelt was then assistant Secretary of the Navy. "Our naval defence must extend all over the Western Hemisphere. It must go out for thousands of miles, as far as the Philippines, and wherever our far flung commerce flag floats. To hold the Panama canal; with Alaska in the North; American Samoa, Porto Rico and our naval bases in

<sup>1</sup> November, 1933, "The United States and their Navy."

Guam, in the Ladrones and Manilla in the Far East, we must have Capital Ships. So we must create a Navy, not only to protect our own shores and our possessions abroad, but also to safeguard our merchant ships in times of war, wheresoever they may choose to trade."

These not-unnatural national views were confirmed so recently as the 29th June '33 by Mr. Secretary-to-the-Navy Swanson.<sup>1</sup> "Our object is now," said he, "to create, maintain and operate a navy second to none and in conformity with treaty provisions."

To quote Mr. Ignatius Phayre, "It is quite obvious that the two rivals envisaged—not to put it more strongly—are Great Britain and Japan. All naval moves appertaining to those powers are canvassed with almost a naïve frankness in Congressional Committees, as well as by the Navy Board, and in service clubs. War with the United States is ruled out of reckoning by our statesmen, and our newspapers too consider such a conflict 'unthinkable'. But, as an American wit has put it, "these 'unthinkable' wars are the ones we are always thinking about!"

These reflections are all perhaps out of place in a chapter on "Disarmament", had it not been for Mr. Roosevelt's naïve statement that the United States would keep out of the League . . . where indeed searching questions may be asked of a member.

One more point here may be alluded to in support of the contention in the last chapter of the economic causes of war. The protective subsidization of our merchant shipping that is probably to come into existence, aims largely at protecting ourselves from the intense and none too scrupulous competition of the United States.

One is almost fain to say with Adam Lindsay Gordon when we think of these words and figures, and of American' methods of penetration in South America:

<sup>1</sup> Also by Mr. Roosevelt on 17th May '33 and Mr. Norman Davis on 22nd May '33.

"Do they the *gloriamus* swell or the *quare fremuerunt*,  
Neither you nor the proudest of Judah's kings  
as a model can stand before us."

Nevertheless we may perhaps believe that the humane and harassed President means what he now says, and is not merely, in his own jargon, Mr. Butinsky. Further, as has been said, the accumulated weight of opinions which cannot be all repudiated, will bring some form of agreement on those points on which it is reasonably easy to agree. Ten years ago Marshal Foch, wiser than Roosevelt or Wilson, and who knew that the War ought to have been carried to Berlin if the lesson was to be a lasting one, said that not only was international control of armaments impossible, but that, further, it was practically impossible to prevent Germany re-arming. Both those dicta, as has been shown, come extremely near the truth to-day and it is on them that practical bargainers will found their working discussions.

It is entirely impossible to prevent modern factories becoming arm, ammunition, and explosive factories in a few weeks. A secret room of plans and gauges alone is required. The Disarmament Commission in Germany destroyed arms, but knew the futility of what they were doing. (v. Professor Morgan in the *Daily Mail*.)

#### OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE ARMAMENTS

Among the most question-begging, self-deceiving of all attitudes, is that of drawing a distinction between offensive and defensive armaments. It can be at once said, "There ain't no sich thing!" Pray are a man's fists offensive or defensive weapons?

The answer of course is that all weapons depend entirely on the mind and temper of the holder. If he is offensive they are offensive, and if he is unaggressive they are

unaggressive, and that applies to every weapon that was ever forged or cast.

If you can, however, introduce a universal convention against maintaining certain forms of weapon for reasons of international economy, well and good. If *you* won't have a Woolwich Infant why *we* won't and so on. What are tanks for? Tanks are the clever inventions of various talented British officers—who, they can't decide among themselves—which gave a reasonable certainty of breaking through a defender's defences without unreasonable and paralyzing losses. Even then the world's artillery is studying hard how to circumvent this usefulness. But it may safely be said that they are an indispensable adjunct of 'civilized' war.

Presumably the idea of only permitting light tanks, is that attack will be prohibitive without heavy tanks, so light tanks are to be permitted whatever that may mean. Submarines are to be prohibited. That, if it were possible, would certainly be to the good of all pockets and of humanity. But submarines have already been dubbed the weapons and the security of the weaker peoples.

If it be possible in the interests of economy or humanity to limit the types and classes of weapons, and if the world will acquiesce therein, a great work will have been done. But do not let us blind ourselves with the idea that we have impeded the dangers of war, in the manner of the Hague Convention regarding explosive bullets, the immunity of the Red Cross and so forth. But if for the sake of economy we can all undertake only to fight with a certain class of weapon, why not go further back, and regain the days of Brown Bess and wooden walls. Millions would then be available for other purposes. We killed enough folk even with them.

The more we look into this matter, the more difficult do we find it. It will probably prove easier to limit numbers by agreement than to control types of arms. It is possible that gas may be eliminated. It is possible that gas bombs



may be ruled out. It is not impossible that as our fathers of old we shall cease to gloat over the prospects now for some inexplicable reason, as has been remarked, so popular, the bombing of the civil population, not as a happening but as an objective. It ought not to be beyond the scope of a body such as the League of Nations to express joint horror of such proceedings. Their presumably less civilized predecessors as the world's leaders would undoubtedly have done so. Please think a little harder on this matter, O would-be civilised world!<sup>1</sup>

#### THE THORNY QUESTION OF AGGRESSION

There is no more thorny question than that of a definition of "aggression." It is perhaps one of the most difficult points that would arise, if the members of the League endeavoured let us say, to put in force the provisions of the Treaty of Locarno. It does in fact, raise the same sort of problem as the definition of "defensive" armaments. It is amusing therefore to read the terms of an agreement signed in London between the Soviet Union and a host of smaller neighbours, such as Turkey, Afghanistan, Roumania, the Baltic States, etc.

The definition of an aggressor is the State who shall first commit one of the following:—

- (1) Declare war on another State.
- (2) Invade by armed force the territory of another State, even without declaration of war.

<sup>1</sup> Since the foregoing was written the new British proposals for agreement on armament has been put forward. It contains naturally much that is reasonable. It is a little tainted with sentiment. That it is not likely to be acceptable is obvious from the French comment that it appears to arrange for the "*re-armament of Germany, and the disarmament of France.*" That has probably killed most of its provisions. It will be noticed that several of the possibilities outlined above, appear in it. Now on February 12th, 1934 we have the French Foreign Minister in the Doumergue Cabinet informing Mr. Arthur Henderson and the Disarmament Bureau that "France's enthusiasm for the cause of international co-operation will not permit her to sacrifice her own security," and he announces that the direct discussions with Germany have broken down.

- (3) Attack by land, sea, or air forces, even without declaration of war, the territory, vessels, or flying machines of another State.
- (4) Establish a naval blockade of the coasts or ports of another State.
- (5) Accord support to armed bands, which, organized on its territory shall have invaded the territory of another State or refuse, in spite of the demands of the Invaded State, to take on its own territory all the steps in its power to deprive the bandits aforesaid of all aid or protection.

No consideration of a political, military, economic, or any other character shall serve as an excuse or justification for aggression as provided under the above.

It was pointed out in *The Times* that under this definition France was the aggressor in 1870, the United States against Spain in 1898, and Japan against Russia in 1904. If the World War be regarded as an aggregate of several wars, then Germany was, it is true, the aggressor as against Belgium, but Great Britain was the aggressor against Germany and also the United States in 1917. If the War be regarded as a whole, Austria-Hungary is the culprit.

It puts a premium on manœuvring to put the other side in the wrong and justifies the Ems telegram referred to in 1870, and on all the devious ways of the most Machiavellian diplomats.

#### THE EXPORT OF ARMS

One of the many troubles that the "Yaller Streak" has got us into is the matter of the Export of Arms and Munitions. These by a comparatively recent British law cannot be exported without licence, and obtaining of licences is one of the embarrassing clogs that hampers trade. It would be a fine thing for the world no doubt if all Powers followed the same line, but as they do not, it merely means loss of trade and unemployment. It means unemployment twice over, the loss of profits to manufacturing firms, and therefore the

loss of spending power of individuals, as well as the definite non-employment of hands. If Japan wants weapons and munitions it is ludicrous that there should be difficulties in way of orders, when if she does not come to us she can get them without restriction next door. You have also got a handle for the hysterical to cry out against a licence to export to Japan or any other Power whose action they may not approve.

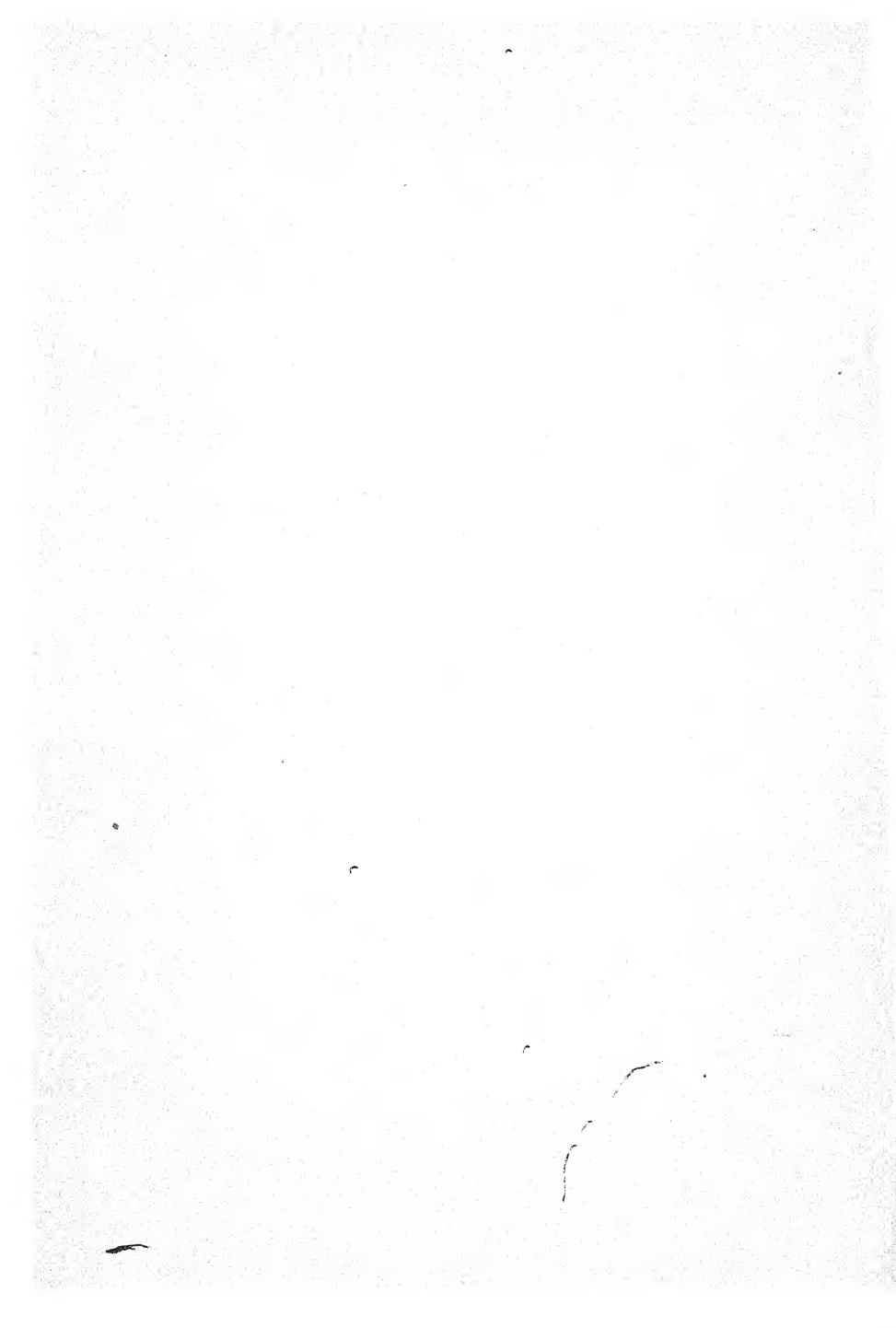
Then again, there is the same difficulty over repeat orders and spare parts, to follow up an original licence. This licence business even when handled expeditiously is kiss-mammy legislation of the worst type, unless part of a universal agreement to follow suit. Its only advantage is that it controls gun running to those who are undesirable owners of such, in uncivilized countries. Even here there is not much good in asking questions, and making restrictions, if other nations are not to do the same. It only means the gun-running orders go elsewhere, just as much as the more legitimate ones.

It is in such gestures and limitations of this kind that the lesser vessels of our League of Nations Union do so much harm. To have passed limiting legislation in the arms matter, for say a year, as a gesture which others might follow, would perhaps have been permissible, but without limit it but takes our trade and gives it to another. Think a little harder please, John Bull!

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II

BRITAIN AND THE WORLD'S PEACE



## CHAPTER VI

### THE WARS AND WAYS OF THE BRITISH

The Ancient Way of England—The Bulldog Grip—The Yaller Streak—Preserving the Martial Spirit—The Norman Angel Conquest—The Irish Trouble—Choice Young Men and Goodly.

#### THE ANCIENT WAY OF ENGLAND

In the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah it is written: "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule thereby, and my people love to have it so". There is the rub, 'my people love to have it so'.

Those familiar with our history will know that extraordinary way in which England, or the British, face their dangers and their wars. Slow to anger, slow to heed, busy with their ploughland, with their wool trade, with their industries and what not, the war merchant is of little account. Cast you cannon, yes! grow you bows, yes! Use them, 'oh run away and play, come hupp 'oss!' Then slowly, reluctantly they grow polite. "Beware! beware my country! when my country grows polite," sang Kipling.

It is such a bore, it is such a waste of time, it spoils such a splendid cricket summer. Again Mr. Kipling tries to stir them 'the flannelled fool at the wicket'; to which, in more modern parlance the British answer, "O yeah!" And then the Briton has suddenly found that he has got to fight. The Scot turns dour, the English turns mirthful. Tim Flinnagan gives "Three Cheers for Kruger! shure if it wasn't for the ould divil there'd be no war at all", and then over the top in France to the cry of "Up the rebels"!

No wonder is the Briton of the United Kingdom a puzzle to all the world and himself as well.

Just the same, in the years that the locusts have eaten since the war, business as usual and a land fit for heroes, and only now do we turn in our slumber, about to shout the modern equivalent of "we want eight <sup>1</sup> and we won't wait".

Through all the ages has the British idea after war been 'never again', talk the old fighting men Home from the wars never so cannily. Disband, disarm, forget! Tell the children never again! Read in Mr. Churchill's *Marlborough* how the splendid Army that brought honour and glory and safety in one campaign is destroyed. Read how he is sent to Flanders with the worst army England has ever hurried together to fight the greatest Marshals. Read how we struggled into the Crimea after forty years of peace, lessons and warnings deliberately neglected. In 1914 Lord Roberts was flouted, till all England became a camp.

It is a curious mentality. In these days of the Air, such waters of Lethe bring not a bitter, costly struggle to breathe, with a final triumphant ending, but the blind death, biting vainly at the hoofs or rather bombs that are beating in your face. And all because the tripe merchants are allowed to lead as the captains depart.

It has already been admitted, however, that our Government after such a war were justified in going slow for financial reasons, and as gesture in the hope of imitators. It is also that way of ours to treat a recent enemy as a bosom friend, and take him into the nearest pub. Lovable? Oh yes! Lovable, magnifique!, but not necessarily either wise or serious in the world's business.

#### THE BULLDOG GRIP

When the time comes to get down to it, it is a very different matter. We are going to see it through this

<sup>1</sup> Battleships.

time. . . . It is 'Thank you Mr. Atkins' and all the rest of it. Hints for peace terms are not welcomed. Honest brokers are turned down, pike and carronnade are the winning cards. After two years of the Crimea we were just in our stride, and were disgusted that the French were tired. In this terrible war that we have seen, the uttermost resources of the Empire were invoked, and up to the very end more and more surprises were coming to hand, more and more hidden resources, and the Army would have gone to Berlin. British shipping was bringing the fruits of all the earth into the field as well as all the nations.

That is how we have done it in the past, luck, pluck and Providence have seen us through, laughing like Powder Monkey Jim at the fun of it, even as we buried the dead. But those days are gone, and while we preach peace and disarmament, the winged death can get both at our shores and our shipping. It is essential to put the Air menace on safer terms forthwith. It is essential to see that there are enough commerce-protecting ships and planes.

If the country won't do it the Lady Houstons will! The subject of what we want is pursued in the next chapter.

But with ships and planes is it essential to struggle hard to keep the Peace Machine at Geneva in working trim?

More curious, however, than our easy after-manners, more remarkable than the bulldog grip, when the nation is aroused, is a very different trait bred of some nasty strain, some 'whoring after Moab,' in the national make up. This Valler Streak must be explored for it is a good deal in evidence the last twelve years, both individually and nationally, perhaps because the best men who should now be leading us, lie dead in the 'six foot of land that is for ever England'.



## THE YALLER STREAK

One of the peculiar things in the make up of the British character is this 'Yaller Streak'. It is a very old story. We had it very clearly evinced during the French Revolution, and later in the Napoleonic times. The sympathisers with the Terror do not matter, that is a point of view; but at a time when Bonaparte was calling on High Heaven to destroy the English, it was not helpful to have a very vocal pro-Bonaparte party in the land. We have seen it in our own times. We have seen Mr. Lloyd George trying to do his country harm in the Boer War; we have seen obviously patriotic British sailors refusing to take our present National Prime Minister to some anti-British Conference in the Baltic during the World War. We have seen not only the conscientious objectors, but even ourselves tolerate them, when man-power was of vital importance.

We have seen otherwise sane folk thank God for Gandhi, I forget why, but presumably because he was largely responsible for a party engaged in assassinating their countrymen, and misrepresenting every work of their countrymen. We have seen one congenital ass of an encumbent putting the old bunniah's figure in his church not as a gargoye, which would be intelligible, but for some unknown reason.<sup>1</sup> That is a delightful sign of the Yaller Streak when your countrymen are vilified: to lap it all up like nectar. The old misleader here in Caxton Hall, while making most atrocious misrepresentations of the licensed liquor trade in India was loudly cheered by all present at the delightful accounts of the moral turpitude of their fellow countrymen. Had anyone dared so to misrepresent French Colonial Governments in Paris the nearest pond would have been too far off to put him in.

<sup>1</sup> Happily the parishioners of the parish where the Gandhi plaque hung have evicted it, and will not even permit it as a gargoye.

There is some strange strain of the 'yaller' in those Urban Councils who have sold or cast away the captured German Ordnance presented to them as a reminder and a sign that their countrymen were shedding their blood against the vile attempt to dominate and oppress, while they at Home were but adding to their girth. German quick-firing guns are hideous, it is true, as trophies, compared with the graceful smoothbores of Waterloo and the Crimea, but they are the outward and visible sign of glory and sacrifice that the young should be taught to revere and remember. Yet 'kiss-mammy' councillors have thought them wrong.

Foolish clergy gird against militarism. Yet militarism and sabre-rattling was never the way of the English. You must not mention the word 'cadets' in the North, because the consciences of workers would be outraged. If tin soldiers are out of fashion one year, even the young men of the Press vie with one another in uttering japes as to the youth of to-day and their soulfulness.

That the young men of Oxford, or a portion of them, should pass foolish resolutions never to serve in war is perhaps part of the make up of a portion of our intelligentia. It does not matter, for either they would be tumbling over themselves to serve if the country were in danger, or else it is to be hoped that they would be bundled along willy-nilly by some of the harder sort in Black Shirts. It is in order, as commonsense men, to pass resolutions urging your Government to leave no steps unturned to prevent war, to accelerate disarmament, but to pass resolutions about serving without reference to the context is but trivial. The worst side of such perverse ways may be that they are but the outward sign of other perversities which affect the unco intelligent.

It is such lads as these that make Fascism, which should be so unnecessary in Merry England, find its *raison d'être*. However, let us pass along. The 'Yaller Streak' of the

Oxford young men may be but too youthful glands functioning apley, and be not worth bothering about.

At the same time this streak is visible in many strange forms, partly, perhaps, due to an inferiority complex. It does not leave a good taste to read Mr. Robert Bernays, who summed up Gandhi so cleverly, rejoicing to think, as he believed, that the 'Raj' in India was finished, that that glorious system which had pieced together the thousand pieces into which the Turkish Empire of Delhi had broken, was dying.

To lay the old Raj to rest, in honour, if such be really necessary is one thing, but to chortle because better men than you are not now required, is but to cherish an unworthy inferiority complex.

Our League of Nations Union has been already dealt with unkindly for the streak of yellow in its composition. Good, kind folk of that class whom old Lady Cardigan's saying already quoted describes as 'hearts full of gold, and brains full of feathers', love to turn the other cheek to be slapped, regardless of the fact that for every slap ten thousand British work-people may be on the Dole. It is an influence which has been too much *en evidence*, and when our public life, political and otherwise, is suffering from the loss of better young men just referred to, leaving an undue proportion of the lesser spirits in our midst. Unfortunately men that are on a higher level, have let their names be associated with it all, without perhaps restraining the second-rate benevolence of their fellow members.

England would do well to put its character into the furnace or the fining pot, or else reduce its population by fifty per cent. and submit to the Normal Angell Conquest. We can be peaceable and sympathetic, accommodating and reasonable, without grovelling.

## THE NORMAN ANGELL CONQUEST

There is a prevalent heresy in some quarters that may well be nailed to the table while we are among the counterfeit coin. Some years before the World War Mr. Norman Angell, as he then was, produced an admirable book, showing how happy were the small countries compared with the big; how prosperous were the Baltic and Scandinavian countries, the Switzers among their mountains and the like. The point was really obvious enough, but it did not show us how to escape from our destiny. Britain as right little, tight little, island, was a charming conception. It did not say how forty-five million folk in a country that could not support twenty million were to earn their living. Fate has put on us the mark of the oversea adventurer, and the price of Admiralty must be paid.

It seems that the wombs of our people instinctively realize that even overseas the openings are fewer, but it will take several generations of the emptier cradle to get Britain into a state in which she can live by taking in her own washing. These teeming millions must have their markets overseas, and since we carry our own goods we need navies and soldiers to protect them against the ravishers who still exist, and fate too has made us an Empire.

Now Sir Norman, spurs on his heels, but with his lance behind the door, tells us the same old story, and we must all agree with him. But he wants all the youth of this polemical world to have all the naughty military words eliminated, and is at one with those aldermen who won't attend the martial displays of local troops and others who do their duty; who won't have little boys allowed to play with swords and soldiers, and like them taught to worship little girls as their mental and spiritual superiors. All war is wrong, and here the people shall devoutly say Amen! But do the other gentry of the world know it too?

So appalling would be the spread of this doctrine except in small doses, that I have been ribald enough to talk of the Norman Angell Conquest, without dead Saxon England for its corollary.

I would rather teach them thus: "Terrible is Tuberculosis, and you must fight and be prepared to resist it. Terrible is cancer, you must fight it and study a cure. Terrible is war, you must study to prevent it. But just as you fortify the body against disease, so must you fortify your land lest a stronger covet it." We have the warrant of the New Testament of the strong man armed, who keepeth his house. In anger and hostile action when necessary do we also see the scourging of those who defiled the Temple precincts.

#### THE IRISH TROUBLE

Peculiar to Britain is the Irish trouble. Unfortunately as far as Britain is concerned this ulcer cannot be removed from the causes of war of some kind. It has pleased Mr. De Valera deliberately with a majority of two or three in his House, to declare war on Great Britain by suddenly, without rhyme or reason, breaking the Treaty under which Ireland was granted a Dominion status. Had it not been that he only represents a moiety of the Irish people, this gesture would have angered good-tempered Britain more than it has.

It was obvious, however, that he was not representing the hostility of Southern Ireland as he claims to do, and that he was probably going to do his country such harm that it might safely be left to bring him to his senses. The Treaty, however, involves a good many things, including the Imperial Garrison in Cork Harbour. It is to be remembered that in discussing the Irish position, Mr. Lloyd George, in his responsible position of Premier, reminded this country that the Normans were compelled to go to Ireland because the Norse pirate settlements in the Liffey

and at Waterford preyed so persistently on the coastwise trade of England.

Similarly he showed that even with Ireland as part of the British Empire the losses of British shipping making for the Mersey during the World War, were very intensive. The graph of submarine losses shows that very clearly. Were Ireland a hostile, independent country, that danger would be magnified very greatly.

For that reason he quite rightly insisted Ireland could never be allowed to break away entirely. Indeed, he told us, the settlement that he was making would allow the Irish to become our dearest friends, and Parliament was also expressly told that the Statute of Westminster did not affect the Irish Settlement.

In this book, girding at 'Hot Air' is frequent; at the soothing syrup of false or unrealisable sentiment that gulls public attention, and lets folly pass for wisdom. Mr. Lloyd George's description of the results of his treaty may be so classed, unless Ireland is able to show that the Devil Era, as the Irish wags call it, is but a nightmare from which she will emerge. The happiness and success of the Cosgrave regime may be a better exponent of the Lloyd Georgian prophesy than the present era. But however that may be, the situation is one that has an element of danger that cannot be ignored, especially with the South Ireland's re-iterated designs on North Ireland, which so prides itself on being a part of the United Kingdom. Ireland is always a country in which guns delight to go off, and which requires watching.

We are lucky in having a minister in charge of the Dominions who while always holding out an olive branch, has not the least intention of advocating the turning of the other cheek. While watching we may be sorry that the Cosgrave attempts at honourable friendship should be so basely and wantonly ended, and that the pronounced prosperity which was visible under his rule should be so disturbed.

## CHOICE YOUNG MEN AND GOODLY

It is the fashion and the temptation to say that every generation is decadent. But in spite of the aberrations of the Oxford young men with the dormant glands, countered by those of Edinburgh who roundly declare that they will always do their duty in the hour of national danger—it is impossible to study the young men and women of to-day without feeling that they are choc-full of the right stuff. Dean Inge has just said that “we shall soon have a population who can neither walk nor write nor read nor think”.

May be! but just as the car habit had become engrained lo! hiking comes in fashion and half the youth of the country are mad about it. The great coaching fleet of England has produced a host of drivers of astounding nerve and endurance. The young people fly eagerly, and if you see the young men and their *bints* doing a reliability trial over the South Downs in wet weather, in a motor cycle combination, you would not say that either sex was soft.

Failings of a somewhat different type to ours no doubt, they do have, with an enquiring mind as regards genetics, but they don't seem to change much. If you have read what the late Prophet Ezekiel had to say about the women of Israel with their “stretched forth necks and their mincing gait, their whimples the crisping ins and the changeable apparel” you will see that times and ways don't change. Then there is that passage in Tobit adorable for its humanity and its modernity. The merchant's son had been going large, and was to go away with his father's friend on a business mission to Ecbatana which is Hamadan, far away from the skirt or skirts that troubled him. They take leave of the father, and set out “and the young man's dog went with them”, as it would to-day.

Nor do I feel that we are doing ourselves much credit

when we abuse the young people we have bred and perchance brought up. It is true that foolish writers in the tripe Press, talk largely of "what the young men are thinking and how glorious youth with its flow of fresh ideas will put the world right". But I, who am old and have been young, have been through it all, and thought how much better I knew, and so had my father before me. But I've a very lively memory of being told that a young man's business was to "keep his mouth shut and his bowels open" and I give to Oxford in terms of recommendation. It is the business of the young to learn the job of life from those who know, to learn to earn their bread, and also to enjoy every hour of their young life whether at work or play; the rest comes later.

Most young men happily know this, and if they don't they soon have to learn, save those "deaf of malice."

It is also said that the young men of to-day lack enterprise and won't go abroad. I doubt it! Whenever I go round the world I find hosts of our choice young men, growing rubber, running counting houses, flying planes, making railroads, serving in defence forces, and as often as not "the young man's girl goes with them" too.

The same has been said any-day, these last fifty years, and yet the Empire trade has trebled itself, and the young men of a generation ago, so condemned for their futility, and their clothes, held the world up in a terrible war and died like flies for the 'old countrie'.

No my Deans and Masters! There is not much wrong with the young folk of to-day—even if they do bump themselves at times. Besides, they are the children of the distressful mother days of the War.

Further, let us remember that the world wants its folk, to a great extent, to be quiet, average, stay-at-home and do-the-dull-work folk. We cannot all be pioneers of expansion. "If you be Queen and I be Queen, who will bang the butter?" as the Eastern saying has it.



## CHAPTER VII

### BRITAIN'S WORLD POSITION

In a Pool, a Swan's Nest—Dominions, Colonies, Possessions—The White Ensign and the Red Duster—The Singapore Base—The Empire and Isolation.

#### IN A POOL, A SWAN'S NEST

IN every consideration, in every review of Britain's armed needs, her peculiar position in the world must be remembered. Because Britain has had internal peace almost since the internecine Wars of the Roses—for the Rebellion against the Stuarts affected the country very little—she has been free to colonize, free and unembarrassed for oversea adventure, and from time immemorial her choice young men and goodly have left her shore to serve, to soldier, to colonize.

Shakespeare has called England, "*in a pool, a swan's nest*". But nests are small places and these islands have always bred more than they feed. So these men of a wandering sea-born race following the instinct of their forefathers and founders "Norman and Saxon and Dane", all of one rover's blood. With the Celts of the same instincts, they have sailed the world around, when Frank and Hun were tearing each other to pieces. From the day of the Varanger Guard has it been so; from the Crusaders and the holding of Aquitaine to the present day. The Great War has seen Atkins and Jock and Tim Flinnagan, in China, in Siberia, in trans-Caspia and on the Oxus, at Bagdad and Damascus, at Vienna, in Silesia and

Arch-angel. What a story to remember, when told in its proper perspective!

But in the old time before, peace at Home sent us everywhere, so that besides the Great Dominions, and the great Crown Colonies of Africa we hold almost all the useful parts of the world in our hands. It cannot be pretended that all these came our way by peaceful methods, but rather by the results of the victories over other maritime nations that had made war on us. Thus French India, because she would not rest content to share the Indian influence, thus other sea points, which all came "by courtesy of Pike and Carronnade". Once they came into British hands, were thrown open to world trade and had we taken full tally of our victories, we might have owned far more of the world.

Our statesmen's vision has seldom kept abreast of the prowess of our troops and navies when driven to war. The most notable retrocession, that should alone crown us with a crown of gold, in the estimation of the world, even consoling us for having lost it ourselves, is that of Java to the Dutch, after we had captured it from Dutch and French, by an expedition from India.

So round the world, the British flag has flown from the 'rising up of the sun to the going down thereof', and British bugles have sounded the sun up and the sun down in its whole course round the globe. The world on the whole, but especially the lesser world, has cheerfully welcomed the position of Britain for the peace and order on the high seas and the progress on the lands occupied.

Happily for the world's peace, Britain and France have long agreed as to what parts of the oversea world each should regard as within the spheres of the others activity. France is developing an enormous Empire in Africa, immensely helped there-to by modern science of movement, and doing thereby the world's work as well as her own. Her Far-Eastern Empire, is also a model development

and she is probably thanking her stars that the Indian inheritance came to Britain.

France, while suffering from the fact that few or comparatively few of her young men want to roam the world, has on the other hand, been free of the said maudlin sentiment that clogs not only our own interest but those of the countries which we rule, which so often comes over us British people. There is, as already remarked, singularly little false sentiment in the make-up of the practical French character.

Nevertheless despite such statesmen's errors as the past may have seen, the world has yielded a very fair share of its dominant positions to the British nation, and to its children of the Commonwealth. There is one lesson which should be written on the skies, blazed in the schools, sung in the streets and hallowed in the churches, that you cannot let your fertility run riot on such limited lands as those of the British Isles. You cannot jam over forty millions on to a land that will but support twenty unless your world-wide trade and markets are open. You must not emit hot-air decisions whenever somebody else asks for some of your portion, and expect your forty millions to live on their present scale of comfort.

Besides the Dominions are your big African possessions which you must develop not, as the rather feeble type of administrator with his eye on the modern equivalent of Exeter Hall seems to think, for the sole benefit of Bantu and pigmy and what-not, but for the joint interest of Britain and Africa. Our colonial administrators as custodians of the native races have been beyond praise for the last fifty years, but now and again, as they get to power, they utter statements, in which hot-air is mingled too much with the juice, if Britain is to remain an Empire and not sink back into her islands and drown half her population.

There are a good many people who still think that we and the Dominions won the War and held up the civilized

world, while the United States were making up their minds, for some better purpose than to sink back to any secondary place. Certain of our statesmen shrink from what stands before us and are afraid of the world's jealousy. The greater line is to stand out, and to make your influence so worth having that the world asks for more of it. That position cannot be attained if the people of these islands are losing trade and influence. Arrogance and domination is no necessary concomitant of upholding all we have attained so hardily in the past.

#### DOMINIONS, COLONIES, POSSESSIONS

It has been remarked elsewhere herein, that neither the World nor the Empire realised our full power and dominion, till the World War. Nor did we envisage the ease with which our magnificent Navy and her auxiliaries and the intrepid Merchant Fleet would bring the resources of the Empire as well as of the World to the uses of the Allies. The possession of the Suez waterways, the paramountcy or whatever you like to call it, which enable us to remove Egypt from even her nominal adhesion to the Turkish Empire, and set her up 'on her own', was the salvation of civilization. In vain Germany and Turkey essayed to seize the Canal, in vain did they try to put mines in the Red Sea, in vain did they hire the ships of some of their jackal allies to drop mines in the fairways of the East.

The sons of these islands overseas, as well as the races for whom we have assumed responsibility, save always the bitter Brahmin venom of part of India, all poured forth. The shipping coming through the Canal braving the Hun submarines that lurked at its northern end was always a sight to see. That forest of masts and smoke stacks that brought the Anglo-Indian force to Marseilles, the scenes in the great harbour of Lemnos, are memories that should never fade.

But the World did note the lesson, and crafty folk have been trying to make the most of their opportunity to draw our teeth whenever Mr. Lansbury's kind heart led him wrong, or the Angell doctrine seemed to walk again. Lord Cromer's old dictum quoted, that the world accepted us because we were such good tenants, should not be forgotten. We must see to it that we are still good tenants, but never give up our tenancies.

It will be seen that I use the good word Empire here, rather than the term fashionable in question-begging circles, because it is a good old word under which the British workman was in work, and because ninety-nine per cent of us know that it is a right and proper word to define this great combine. Commonwealth of Nations is a very nice word too and when Canada and Australia have twenty or thirty million folk a-piece it will be a still better one. No one minds the first term except where the snivel of the lesser socialist cant has congested the air passages. Little boys bred where the English language is feebly taught no doubt do associate the word with Kaiser and Tsar, but, because their English is at fault, and their superiority complex gone agley, that is no reason why the whiter portion of our world should object to it. In fact the unregenerate folk round the world still use it, and even in South Africa, the Dutch like to boast of their British friends and their place in the Empire. So British Empire let it be, please!

We may not admire all the ways of Herr Hitler, but there is something to be said for a regime that puts such gentlemen as the distinguished and no doubt ambitious lawyer who aims at dictating for us, and all enthusiasts who wish to reduce the British dietary to the Russia scale, into the cage of a concentration camp. Any indeed of those enemies of prosperity and civilization who would upset a going concern for a chimera of sour jealousy or even for a woolsack. Six months' instruction on how to

spell Empire and Prosperity, till every bit of the non-Aryan blood had left them would help. That is Herr Hitler's way, and we have already suggested that the world may yet say Thank God for Hitler! or the excellent parts of Hitler, if not for the whole egg. A good course of the greater and lesser Kipling might even be prescribed.

At any rate our fathers have bequeathed us, and our older living men have left us, such a position in the two worlds that any one who would upset it, rather than improve it, should go marry the Scavenger's Daughter or kiss Madame Guillotine.

Peace, the peace of the strong man armed, should see it more wonderful and effective for the world's good and our own folks' happiness, each generation, this Empire which is also a Commonwealth, for the two are good companions.

#### THE BASE AT SINGAPORE

Happily for the world, our Socialist Governments could not do more than retard the building of the improved harbour and dockyard at Singapore, which will also be the Air Base of the Far East. We do not perhaps realise how the Air has come to the East, how from the Dutch colonies round to Shanghai people fly as they would take a taxi. A conversancy with our still great Eastern trade, with the mischief brought on it by the German cruisers in 1914, few though they were; with the position of Japan if she so wished it; with the safety of Australia and New Zealand, who are contributing handsomely; all combine to convince us that its construction is an essential. Let us hope that we are still bearing in mind the cardinal principle that *trade abroad means employment at Home*.

This Singapore business is no new policy, but merely a bringing up-to-date of what has existed for more than a hundred years, a defended port and a naval base in the Far East, or what is better described as the Threshold

of the Far East. Big ships, the rise of new powers, have merely meant that the base and harbour must march with the times.

So for God's sake! my good kind Socialist gentlemen, see to it, should this England think you worthy to hold the reins again, that you do not tamper with the foundations that feed your expectant supporters. Write 'men' and 'women' on all lavatories if it pleases you, tamper with the police if the public will let you, tax enterprise out of existence, dance any dance you like on your tubs at the street corners, but do not tamper with the control and protection of the waterways that carry your trade. Never mind if the wrong men do get rich so long as the money they get is spent for others to earn.

It were absurd to mix up so unworthy a subject with the stately question of Empire and safety did not we find our Whitehall beds lodging strange bedfellows.

#### THE WHITE ENSIGN AND THE RED DUSTER

In the excitement of making Britain "record conscious" which is the curious suggestions of those who own speed tracks and engine factories, we are letting perhaps our young folk forget what the White Ensign and the even more glorious "Red Duster" the Trader's Jack, stand for. Foreigners, thinking, world-conscious foreigners, have gloried and wondered at the British flag more than we do ourselves. The complete policing of the unpoliced seas by the British Navy has been the world's wonder and earned the world's approbation. The suppression of the slave-trade, the extermination of the 'arms traffic, where arms can do no good, the extermination of almost all piracy, have been the work of your Navy.

Until the North Sea peril demanded the concentration of the Naval force in Home waters, the White Ensign sailed every sea, and was known of the world and known gratefully

by all save the slave barons and the arms kings. When the White Ensign perforce grew less visible for a while, the cruiser—the powerful British cruiser which often showed deceptively small beside some bulky foreign anachronism—still watched and guarded. Only since the jealous world let the China situation go to pieces has piracy again shown its head. But the policing of all seas, the securing that none save known belligerents fighting under open conditions shall fire guns, is what the world wants from the British Navy. It is what the Treaties of Washington and Paris have deprived the world of, through short-sightedness, for a while.

So sensible was the world's shipping, that every vessel on the high seas used to dip its flag, not only to the White Ensign but even to the Red Duster, not solely out of recognition to the British influence for good, but as a tribute to primacy. Now though courtesy still maintains the old custom on the part of many, it is avoided, as a mark of pride, by new and aspiring navies.

That the growing world should build and own its own trade fleets is not to be wondered at or quarrelled with. But that a deliberate policy of destroying the Red Duster trade by the subsidizing of cargo fleets, as against the British shareholder is absurd. It is a matter which any British Government *must* take up, and it probably means that the granting of a subsidy to meet such attacks, will not only be aided but will be fully met in the reduction in the 'dole'. To gird, however, against lascar crews is childish. Lascar crews are used on those lines in competition with Japan and other low-geared races. If British crews were employed the lines could not offer low freights, and still more ships would be laid up.

But what is needed is that subsidization to capture British trade with ships purchased at depreciated rates from British anchorages and then run in subsidized competition on routes that have always been British, shall be stopped.



To allow it to continue is merely to hasten the return of these islands to being just a Swan's Nest in a very crowded hungry pool. It is one thing to respect and accept the fact that the backward nations are coming forward in the world's activities, it is another to allow them to purchase your ships and then run them by subsidy.

British world-trade and world-carrying is the vital essence on which this Empire lives. A law to tattoo it on every child would not be too drastic a way of making the race aware of it.

The question of Naval strength which is so mixed up with this question has been discussed elsewhere. But the Red Duster and the White Ensign are inextricably mixed up, and it is the folly of the lack of lesser cruisers that the whole British Naval world is up in arms at, as well as every trader.

#### THE EMPIRE AND ISOLATION

In the many discussions that the German developments have given rise to, the clamour that the British Empire, or Commonwealth of Nations if you prefer it, should be sufficient unto itself, and should stand out of the troubles of the continent have been very vociferous. The idea has much, of course, to commend it, were it in any way feasible. But the whole course of our history points the other way. A world-wide Empire means that we touch every other nation at innumerable points. We cannot be insensible to anything that goes on, and major happenings shake British interests at every move. Even if we and the Dominions were sufficiently populous to absorb all our trade, isolation would be impossible. The mere fact of the Suez Canal is one of many that emphasize this fact.

From time immemorial the prevention of the Low Countries coming into the hands of a big rival power has taken our armies to Europe; the sanctity of the Scrap of Paper for which we fought in 1914 was the expression of

the same conviction. With Air domination the integrity of our adjacent neighbours, is even more important. From time immemorial have we been wrapped up in the maintenance of certain conditions on the Continent, on the stabilizing of unstable components. Even when in mid-Victorian times Manchester and the industrial prosperity was changing England, we fought the Crimea, badly no doubt, but for the same reason.

Sir Austen Chamberlain has said that there is nothing more likely to produce Napoleon's dream of a combination against Britain than a policy of Isolation, of standing aloof from our neighbours' troubles. As the Emperor Napoleon dreamed of bringing Europe against England, whose fault was that she would not let Europe be bullied by one man or nation, so for very similar reasons did the Kaiser, as we know from his notes, plan our downfall. The results have been the same to those who planned, but then up to now we have always when the pinch came, stood in with our neighbours, for that European, not British principle, the 'Balance of Power'.

By Locarno we have guaranteed each of the powers their safety, including Germany, who therefore need not for the moment, be so anxious at the wall of steel which does undoubtedly, and of some design surround her. Wherever we turn, trade, exchange, maintenance, tradition, obligations, friendship, support, all point to the fact that to leave Europe to stew in its own juice unsupported and unhelped, must turn the world against us.

We ourselves are in it for all time, long indeed before Cæsar came out of Gaul. Moreover, the very threat that we shall remove our support is, behind the scenes, one of the most potent ways in which we use our influence.

Sir Austen Chamberlain refers also to the belief of France that a definite statement of our intention of going to war in 1914 would have stopped the outbreak altogether, at any rate at that juncture. This suggestion has already

been expressed herein, coupled with the rider that even had the pre-War Territorial Force had any foreign liability in its constitution, however safe-guarded, then again Germany would not have thought of war.

Again here may it be said that a little firmer display in the assertions and public speeches of our readers might have saved Germany from herself. To use a schoolboy phrase of the last generation we all know how the German Ambassador in London was 'sucked' in by our hot-air emissions and how he falsely primed his own Government. Had we been super-Machiavellis we could not have done it better. On the Afghan frontier it is not fair to carry arms and not display them, it tempts young men. It was Falstaff who said that young men must live and gorbellied knaves with fat purses are fair game. If you display your arms, would-be robbers will refrain. Similarly, it does pay sometimes to be downright.

It is true that the super-kindly sentiments that our ministers have been compelled to emit against the judgment of their own knowledge, has done us harm. We do not appear to some of harder heads of the foreign chancelleries as very wise, logical or trustworthy, but still we are the great stabilizing force of the world. Could our ministers, in their public utterances, deflate some of the warmer air, they would have greater prestige, and find their remonstrances or advice more readily acceptable. Here in England we probably know who talks tripe because he cannot help it, and who talks it to humbug his Cabinet or please his caucus, but the world is not always so well informed.

Nevertheless, if some of our vocative ones were to see their dossier in the secret card indices in the foreign bureau, they would be surprised. An English paper may send its obituary notices out to the subjects thereof before their death, like *Who's Who*. Foreign card indexers of character are not so obliging.

But whether our ministers and envoys emit tripe to order or to conviction, the more we ponder deeply into our real position of Europe, the more do we see that we cannot let it be one of isolation and stand out, in our own interests of those of civilization.

The United States, despite their Senator Borahs, know perfectly well that the day has passed when even they can remain out, however much they may deplore it.

## CHAPTER VIII

### BRITAIN'S ARMED NEEDS BY SEA AND AIR

British Disarmament—Britain and her Navy—Naval Armament and the London Treaty—The World's Air Forces—Civil Air Fleets—The Bombing Danger—The Bombing of our Narrow Waters: and Convoy—The Sea and Air Controversy—Planes on Land Frontiers.

#### BRITISH DISARMAMENT

By universal admission, from the definite statements of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, speaking with all the force of his position, downward, Britain has disarmed below the margin of safety. What does this mean? It means that we have reduced our magnificent Navy below our minimum needs, that we have not a large enough Air Force for our protection at the heart of the Empire, and that our military forces are so low that we can barely despatch from these island enough troops to carry on our own minimum liabilities within our Empire, let alone any visible contribution to maintaining the peace treaties and the peace of the world.

Have our Governments then, Coalition, Conservatives, Socialist or National, neglected their duty during the years that the locusts have eaten? *Yes*, and *No*, and probably the *No* preponderates, always supposing that they are alive to the situation, and not ready to shirk facts.

The Two-Power standard of the Navy had disappeared. It was obvious that the bottom had been knocked out of any standards or ratios at least for a while, by the passing of the German fleet to the bottom of Scapa Flow. With

the United States and France our late allies, and far too exhausted to think of more war, with the needs for economy more urgent than anything else, to scrap a large portion of all our forces was obviously right and our meet and bounden duty. But the problem at once struck the General Staffs of the three forces and the Committee of Imperial Defence, that there were absolutely no data to go on as to post-war requirements. With the disarmament siren calling, with no man able to foretell anything, there was very good reason for calling very canny.

It is also to be remembered, that practically every soldier and airman, and the major portion of the Navy, was time expired in 1918. To retain this personnel in the forces at all was in many cases, if not *ultra-vires*, at any rate very near it, and more than the flesh and blood and the sense of discipline of the war-time soldier, sailor or airman could stand. All wanted to get back into civil life, and to get back to their careers in the world that was to be fit for heroes. All were anxious for the rare and refreshing fruit that the premier, the somewhat scared premier, was offering them.

Let us look for a moment at the case of the Regular or Standing Army. It is a good example of the problems that faced Government. That Army consisted in pre-war time of some 230,000 men. The major portion of this was and is required for the normal garrisons of the Empire. It was wanted for these purposes the very day of the Armistice, as well as for the compulsory if temporary garrisons which the conditions of the Armistice and the post-war conditions demanded. There were the garrisons in the Black Sea, in Mesopotamia, the rebellions in Ireland, the extra garrisons of Egypt, the rebellion in the Punjab, the invasion of India by the Afghans, all shouting for troops, and yet the troops were all either Territorial or 'War enlisted men for the duration' and a subsequent period hard to enforce.

The War Office usually raised by voluntary enlistment in the United Kingdom some 35,000 men a year. It could only get more by reduction of physical and character requirements. By a miracle, by herculean efforts not yet described and recorded, but worthy of all admiration, something like 200,000 men were enlisted into the Regular Army, and despatched in the re-raised old units to their world destinations. Difficulties and contretemps there were in the abnormal conditions of life and mentality, but they were few. The old Regular Army, but larger than usual, reproduced itself almost by a stroke of the Adjutant-General's pen. Then came the slow withdrawal of troops from Constantinople, from the Black Sea and from Palestine. The Army began to approach its pre-war dimensions, the dimensions that had with difficulty given us our little Expeditionary spearhead behind which Britain in arms sprang into being. It could not be said that we had failed to reduce—two million men drop then to 200,000, and now to far less than even that.

#### BRITAIN AND HER NAVY

The position in the world of the British Navy, the astounding and unique position that it has occupied from the days of the Thirty Years' War, has rarely been 'understood of the people', but at the same time until modern thought in certain quarters became decadent, the public mind knew that the whole existence of the nation depended on it and on its power. Tragedy, the tragedy of competition, arose in its acute form when, contrary to the earnest advice left on record by Bismark, Germany, and her will-of-the-wisp Grand Admiral Von Tirpitz, started building a grand fleet, that was openly flaunted as the opponent of Britain. that there were provocations of a kind need not be denied, but those provocations came from the Emperor of Germany's telegram to President Kruger.

Following the erratic light of that Grand Admiral Von Tirpitz Jack o' Lantern, Germany danced over the marshes that led to the scrap heaps of Jutland and to Scapa Flow.

The old British scale of the two-power standard was not a scientific one and had no special virtue except that it served to grip the man in the street, to give him a rule of thumb to guide him, to send him into the streets calling:—

"We want Eight, and we won't wait,"  
when battleship construction was in question, and the Treasury reluctant.

Now there are no values, no guides, and no formula; all that the public knows is that they have been tricked and drugged, and that our politicians have tried to deliver us to a Naval Dictatorship of another power.

Apart from the destruction of the Spanish Armada by the small Elizabethan navy, and its fleet of jackal auxiliaries from every British port—and it is but right to remember that the Spanish Fleet was not a battle fleet but a convoy of armed transports with no great escort—our real naval start began when Charles II's ill-found ships put it hand-somely across Dutchmen and French in the Channel. Then the wars in the Low Countries, the war with Louis XIVth that threw up a Marlborough, also threw up its Admirals, its Cloudesley Shovels and who-nots, and not only left Britain mistress of the seas, but also founded the British Empire. A statue to the *Grand Monarque*, the *Roi Soleil*, is as needed in a galaxy of British benefactors as any one else in the world.

That, however, is by the way, but let us remember before going on to the modern Naval world, how Mahan nailed to the mast the position of the British Navy as the police force of the League of Nations. Speaking of Nelson's battered fleet that kept the sea so long, it is his words that sum up so eloquently the position that the world wanted to know. "It was those storm-tossed ships on which the Grand Army never looked, that stood between Napoleon



and the Dominion of the World." And what was true in the beginning of the nineteenth century was true in 1914. It would have been *Deutschland uber Alles*, instead of "Please may I have some tanks," if there had been no commanding British Navy. How far Air Forces are to take up the role of the Navy is one of coming problems to be solved.

However that may be, victories, such victories as the Allies won, did naturally postulate disarmament of a kind and for a while. To prevent the resuscitation of the need and desire to re-arm, is the main reason for the League of Nations. Of that there can be no dispute. The question is, has it led us where we wanted it to go, and the answer, as already explored, is Alas! No!

#### NAVAL DISARMAMENT: THE LONDON TREATY

From all sides expert and inexpert, now comes the assertion that in Naval strength this country is below the margin of safety. The following are the British Naval figures in brief for all who run to read:—

	At the opening of war 1914.	At the Armistice.	In the summer of 1933.
Capital Ships (viz. Battleships)	69	59 (Two only are Post-War)	15
Cruisers . . . . .	108	109	53
Destroyers and Torpedo Boats	322	527	159
Submarines . . . . .	74	137	52

So much for the suggestion that Britain has not disarmed, an assertion which, to their shame, to foul national waters, the Socialists are fond of making.

By the agreement of Washington, which became the London Naval Treaty, in cynical contempt of all Naval opinion and expert advice so far as the British position was concerned, the agreed on figures are as shown below. Those for 1914 are prefixed for facility of comparison.

TONNAGE	Britain & Dominions	U.S.A.	Japan	France	Italy
Strength in 1914 . .	2,160,326	881,022	522,022	746,214	353,861
Permissible till 1936 . .	1,151,450	1,095,600	720,130		
Probable total . .	1,123,899	1,031,300	705,735	972,419	426,118
Comparison of last figure with that of 1914 . .	-48%	+17%	+35%	+10%	+20%

The foregoing figures are startling enough. But it is fair for all to say that with the German High Seas Fleet at the bottom of Scapa Flow, there was ample room for disarmament. No one in England disputed this, and hence our balance of 15 capital ships left from our 69, a reduction of 75 per cent.

At the present moment it is the fashion in the United States to assert that British Naval construction since the Treaty has largely exceeded that of the United States; certain figures again may be asked to give such assertions the lie.

Between 1930, and 1933, Britain has laid down or authorised ships to a total of 156,245 tons as compared with that of the United States of 243,500. As a matter of fact these figures are all within the Treaty provisions and are but quoted to refute this not very pertinent statement in America. Mr. Swanson, the Secretary for the United States Navy, has now called in his annual report for an immediate building programme to bring the United States Navy up to the full Treaty Strength by the date of its expiration, viz. the 31st December, 1936, and in last June he announced a building programme of 32 warships to cost at par £47,600,000.

Mr. Swanson, however, has stated that the Navy of the United States will require a total of 101 additional ships to complete to Treaty Strength. The Treaty, be it observed, arranged permissively for practical parity with the British Navy. It is to be noticed that the Japanese are cavilling at the proportion to which they then agreed,

viz, a proportion of 3 as compared with the 5 of Britain and the U.S.A.<sup>1</sup>

In defiance of the advice of our Naval advisers, the American domination and dictation was accepted. It was they who forced up the size of battleships when our sailors were content with 25,000 tons. It was they who insisted, and we agreed, that the big battle cruisers should be in one category with the lesser cruisers, thereby reducing apparently the tonnage available for the protection of the Empire trade from 70 to 50. There is no manner of possible reason why England should for one moment give way to American dictation, or to the leaven of a small bitter clique in the Senate who plot to thwart England at every turn, and have done so for the last century.

To this country have always come the pleasant gentlemanly English Americans of the East aforesaid, to make us think that Americans are our own flesh and blood, while the anti-British spirit of the Middle West is kept out of sight at the luncheons and dinner at which the pretty speeches are made—speeches in which the makers are often as deluded as their hearers.

The only possible excuse for accepting the American figures for a while was the belief that till the Treaty expired we could safely play low, while determining to bid higher, should times require it. The worst of such a 'long' policy, is the changing of our Governments. If a National Government puts the matter right a Socialist Government would let well alone, but if a Socialist Government were in when the time came to correct the balance, one cannot imagine a national and proper view being taken. You cannot live on hot-air while out of office and spit fire when in, however much it may be your duty to do so.

The limitation of battleships and battle cruisers and their accessories, is a matter probably on which civilization

<sup>1</sup> The Hoover proposals of 1931 suggested a further reduction, still more unsatisfactory to Britain.

can agree. The strength of commerce protection cruisers is a matter for ourselves alone, and we could perfectly well insist on keeping such figures for ourselves at our own figure. Now is the time to assert our own independence in this matter while striving as before to limit the battleships.

In this connection it is well to allude to the occasional outcry against battleships, and the wish of the writers to talk in terms of aircraft and submarine. In this matter the journalist and the Naval officer of crank tendencies who is never behind the scenes, is not the type of guide the country wants. The Naval experts in conclave are the only possible source of expert opinion, to which a competent First Lord should be able to bring some wise non-expert contribution. This matter will be touched on further, later in this chapter.

#### THE WORLD'S AIR FORCES

The public is at the moment, extremely startled at what it learns to be the state of our Air Forces. After the War, very properly and naturally, the Air Forces also were reduced very largely. Nor was it possible to form for some little time any estimate of what post-war air conditions, civil or military, were going to be.

The Conquest of the Air has probably been the greatest misfortune that the world has encountered. It has enormously added to the expense of all defence forces without producing any compensating reduction of land and sea forces. Its use in civil life is already tending to help destroy the national wealth invested in rail and shipping by just so much as it replaces the use of these for travel and despatch. It is not too much to say that the unremunerative cost of the air, the pouring of money into something that does not add to the world's wealth and productive power on a large scale is disastrous.

It is to some extent, equivalent to the prolonging of life in the non-productive years that is adding to our trouble. Its

inventors are worthy perhaps of the same execration as all the armament inventors of the world. Human nature could kill itself quite sufficiently fast in the Waterloo days and with the Waterloo standard of arms. All the time and money spent on modern guns and rifles is the most wicked waste that man can imagine, and history will some day say so very forcibly.

Nevertheless the world has never been able to call stop. Already are our lethal weapons of the World War obsolescent. One of the striking things in the Dardanelles was that the magnificent fleet assembled there was obsolete. Its loss meant no great damage to our decisive Naval power. The greater fighting strength lay in the powerful squadrons of the North Sea Fleet. Yet to-day those Leviathans, those marvels of human skill and execution are themselves out of date. What will history say to that?

However, whether the conquest of the Air is going to make the world one jot or tittle the better, is neither here nor there. Airways and airplanes and air forces are here to stay, and airman are very wonderful beings.

That being so how do we stand? In air armaments despite the excellence, the daring, the prestige of our airmen, we are in the air a fifth-rate power.

These are the figures from *All the Worlds Aircraft*. France has 3,000 fighting planes, the United States 2,826, Japan 2,200, Italy 1,507, Great Britain the power that held up the civilized world in the World War has but 1,434, including her force in India, Egypt, Palestine and Iraq, and barely 700 of them in Great Britain.

There is obviously no great chance of the powers agreeing to abolish military planes. It is true this proposal was sent up as a *balon d'essai* at the Disarmament Conference. It is true that humanity and civilization would be infinitely better therefor. But the world apparently just won't. It is possible that in the hope that it would do so, our ministers may wisely have postponed our starting our over-due increment. It is true, too, that aeroplanes can be built a hundred

times as fast as ships. It is obviously time, too, that we had an agreement of limitation as to fighting aeroplanes.

But there is another air complication. M. Pierre Cot, French Air Minister, who recently visited the Soviet Government aviation centres, has recently told the Foreign Affairs Committee in the French Chamber, that in five years Russia would be making more planes than all Europe put together; that her factories were well equipped and more were being erected. The existing Russian Air Force is good and numerous and her leaders have been openly boasting that Russia will dominate the world in the air.

Even allowing for a considerable number of grains of salt in this, in view of what is known of the inefficiency of Russia's other factories, the position needs the closest study.

To coin a phrase, the Combatancy of the Air rests on a somewhat different basis from that of the Sea. In modern times is it not possible to make a non-military ship into a military one, using the word military as referring to all war. But to convert a civil aeroplane to a bomb-dropper is a very simple matter. In countries where folk do as they are told, as for instance, Italy or Hitlerstan, planes in civil use can easily be compelled to follow convertible lines. In merry England where every man can still do pretty much as he likes, we achieve a similar result by subsidy. The fact remains that a country that does most flying, will have the most readily available and most powerful potential bombing and scouting air-fleet.

It will be noticed that Lord Rothermere has lately urged France to have 20,000 planes and lead the world. The Earl of Galloway openly urges the same course on Britain. At the bottom of what well do truth and sanity lie.

#### THE CIVIL AIR FLEETS

England is a very small country geographically, with an unpleasant climate for a considerable part of the year

and we have not the inducements to fly of the continental nations, of the United States or even Canada. H.R.H. the Prince of Wales has recently urged the British to fly more, to become air-minded and just as we are getting interested, Christmas passenger planes perish. But circumstances are against it. Pleasure flying at their own expense is beyond the purse of the mass of people. Travel-flying is minimised by the short distance and dull climate, by the fog and mist that prevails for so many months in the year on the spine of high ground in continuation of the Pennine range which reaches down to the Thames.

The needs and advantages of flying in Britain do not jump to the eye. From San Francisco to New York, yes! From Vancouver to Montreal, every time! From Perth to Adelaide or Brisbane! All save time and trouble and expense. From London to Birmingham, Paddington and Euston are less trouble than Croydon, and in business matters it is time and trouble that counts. You can hardly expect the shareholders of the Great Western Railway for instance, to put an aerodrome on the top of Paddington Station to lessen their passenger traffic for them. Air-mindedness in the big spaces of the world is business-mindedness; in Merry England it is largely joy-ridingness.

The flying clubs are peopled chiefly by those exceeding bright young people who have taken to the air for pleasure, for excitement and romance; to whom breakfast in London, lunch in Belfast, or tea in Plymouth, is better fun than a round of golf at Stoke Poges. These people, and they are some of the salt of the earth for war purposes, of the same brand as manned the fast war coastal motor boats, are hard hit by the depression. The leisured monied class whose pursuits chime in with war service in emergent war-roles are clipped, cabined and confined.

Therefore to a considerable extent, climate and geography as well as resources, are against a great increase in our air-minded people. Even on the continent things are easier

than here. In Russia, where the distances are greater than in North America or Australia, again every time! In France, Paris to the *Cote d'Azur* by air is good business, or from Berlin to the Rhine.

The question to be considered is how to compensate for this disability.

Subsidies to flying clubs, with military conditions attached, expenses of would-be pilots minimised by personal grants in aid of training, even reduction of fares by subsidy on certain routes to railway and packet level, to encourage general air-mindedness, are all methods that have been no doubt in the eye of the Air Ministry and Air Force Headquarters.

We may gauge it to some extent, by the following figures, figures governed by business conditions and national areas not by the 'air-mindedness', save so far as that follows business advantage. The civil flying figures for 1932 show the situation, the natural situation as explained above, very clearly.

<i>Country.</i>	<i>Miles Flown.</i>
United States . . .	50,932,967
Germany . . .	5,712,117
France . . .	5,487,512
Italy . . .	2,889,452
Holland . . .	1,919,422
Great Britain . . .	1,766,000

The figures for Russia are not forthcoming, nor those for Canada, which would be interesting, where such matters as prairie and forest fires are watched from the air, and the North-West kept in touch.

#### THE BOMBING DANGER

A great deal is made both by the flesh-creepers and the more serious writers of the bombing peril, and the fact that no longer is London isolated by the Channel and



the length and breadth of Kent, Essex or Sussex. The point is a very grave and serious one. We are if not ten minutes, at any rate, an hour from our potential enemies' coasts. But fortunately, as Marshal Foch has also pointed out, so are they. The flying straight to the heart of your enemy's mainsprings and centres is a game that more than one can play; for that reason be not so terribly dismayed; always assuming that you are equipped sufficiently to make this tit for tat a danger to your adversary.

The corollary is that the anti-air defences must be good and adequate and more up-to-date each day. Let us trust that our own are beyond doubt so. It has been said that while only thirty tons of explosives were dropped over London in the whole of the World War, that now that amount could be easily dropped in a day and it is so, but again you can do the same to them. Nevertheless, it is a very right and meet, and our bounden duty, to ask our ministerial masters frequently whether we are complete and up-to-date in our air defences, and if even when our ministers say 'Yea, Yea!' to be quite sure that the experts do not say 'Nay, Nay,' and if it is so let the matter be probed.

Fortunately anti-air craft defence lends itself extremely well to a Territorial part-time basis, more so than anything, better even than coast defence. A small permanent staff ensures efficiency.

More than ever is our comfortable citizen flesh made to creep over the stories of the deadly gases, of the dye-makers and other laboratories in sinister countries and in Hitlerstan being stealthily at work exploring and bringing the arts of peace as close as may be to those of war, and again it is so. The saving clause is that the effect of these gases is far more local than is depicted. Bombs of terrible gases, will have terrible effects in confined spaces, but they disperse so rapidly that the evil in the open soon is gone. On the other hand, mustard gas on the garden seats and the park chairs is too terrible to contemplate!

It is all in the way of good business that gas effects, gas first-aid, and gas refuges shall be closely studied by all voluntary-aid folk of all kinds.

So serious is the bomb peril, and so universal, though, as just said, not quite so bad as the flesh-crawlers would have us believe, that here is a definite point which Nations might easily agree to call a truce on. To tempt the world's legislators let it be agreed that on no account should any legislative buildings or ministerial offices be bombed at any time under no less a penalty than, etc. . . . as the rituals have it. That should produce a universal agreement in Parliaments and places where they talk.

Just as, so the wags had it, the snipers were forbidden in South Africa or on the North-west Frontier of India to shoot generals and other professional muddlers, so should parliamentarians be exempt from intentional bombing! Speaking with a little less levity, there is obviously room for some international Hague Convention regarding bombs in Whitehall, the Quai d'Orsay, the Wilhelms' strasse or Hitler-skerry. Indeed it might even be extended to the world's unarmed cities. There would still be free play for the instinct to treat your adversaries to death by the thousand cuts elsewhere, and the killing of man would not be seriously threatened by such a convention, any more than by that about the small-bore explosive bullet, the which in itself is a paradox.

But since, as has been said, air-craft of the civil aviator is a potential bomb-dropper, there is little to be said for barring military air-craft unless you could really agree what war in the air should cease. It will be remembered how in recent, not very serious, discussions at Geneva of the Disarmament Conference, Britain was not ready, especially at that stage, to abandon her punitive tribal bombing. It was explained that this often reduced raiding and rebellious tribes to order without the expense and loss of life to both sides that military expeditions involved.

A few words on this matter will be said in the next section. The objection on the part of other Powers would obviously be that a Power which kept police planes of this description would have them ready to hand in war time. The answer to that is that if all folk undertook not to bomb from the air this would not matter, and if there be no such agreement the civil plane can become a bomber so quickly that the question would not really arise.

It is said that our air needs for defence are ten new squadrons, presumably on a territorial or part time basis.<sup>1</sup> Whatever it is should now be determined, and a plan of development set forth, with a public statement to the effect that European agreement might lead to its modification. Service opinion now seems to be that ten squadrons are not enough, in view of developments of Germany—that Germany, for whose colonies we and France have the mandate.

#### THE BOMBING OF OUR NARROW WATERS AND CONVOYS

One of the great dangers of the modern air combatancy is the bombing of the narrow entry to ports such as the Thames, Humber, or Mersey entrances, where the channels narrow. Our eastern and southern ports are very close by air to the Continent. Mr. Lloyd George when speaking a few years ago on the Irish question, spoke, as just stated, of the danger in the Mersey from enemy submarines based on Ireland.<sup>2</sup> Planes would be even a more serious matter. So serious is this particular matter, as well as that of the bombing of convoys in open sea, that unless War can be banished altogether from land, sea and air, it must be provided against. There is only one way of defence, and that is counter-air-craft and anti-air armament below, of which the former is probably far the more effective.

<sup>1</sup> It is believed that a start at the provision of these may be made.

<sup>2</sup> This was referred to in Chapter VI at more length.

How narrow are our waters a glance at the map will show. The Thames is the entrance to the world's greatest port. The fairways are very long and narrow. The pilot of a bombed ship might easily put her on the mud. The Medway, Harwich, the Humber, the Tyne, the Weir, the Scottish and Eastern Ports are all on river entrances and are different in this respect from Queenstown, Portsmouth and Plymouth.

It is a matter that needs to be thrashed out without delay, as one of reasons that compel us to put our aircraft and our civil flying on a better footing.

#### PLANES ON LAND FRONTIERS

The question of the use of aeroplanes on the frontiers of national powers such as ourselves, the French, and Japan in Manchukuo, has two different facets. One is their *military* value on such frontiers, which the Air forces are apt to magnify, but which are obviously considerable in certain directions. The other is their *police* usefulness, about which certain of the Powers are so confident, and which, as already remarked, do obtain results at far less cost and ultimate loss of life, than ground police and troops. These advantages are so great that we and no doubt France, refused to listen to those who want to abolish all plane bombing, and insist on 'police' reservation.

As to the value of air operations on our frontiers, these vary very much with the conditions. The Air Force has taken over the defence of Aden within the last two or three years. As the disturbers of the peace there were tribes living on the other side of a wide desert stretch, they could only be got at by a punitive expedition which was costly and comparatively cumbersome, therefore the Air Force is admirably suited for the purpose with, of course, the necessary coast artillery. Now when tribesmen insist on attacking caravans or disobeying the orders of the paramount

authority, a visit from a few planes which can be deadly if need be, is enough.

The same applies on the North-west Frontier of India, contumacy and the breaking of the agreements and promises, raids and robbery under arms are easily countered without again the necessity of the punitive expedition. That is all to the good. What, however, the Air Force cannot do, is that it cannot bring a tribe to reason which is not affected by its bombing or threat of bombing. It is the habit to let the tribes know that they will be bombed. This is a tribute to a situation like that which once arose on the Euphrates where a friendly Sheikh came to complain that he had been bombed.

"Oh!" said the political officer, "dear, dear! I'm very sorry . . . some mistake. . . . I hope no damage was done."

"No," replied the Sheikh, "happily no. . . . God be praised! Only a cow and a wife I hated."

The point of this ribaldry is that bombing is a promiscuous 'straafing', and no one knows who it may catch. The British Government does not, like the writers and journalists, who write of modern war, dwell gloatingly on the prospect. War is, now, they say, to be waged against women, children and old folk to make a nation change its policy! It is not quite clear why this change has come to war ethics, but at any rate in this case of tribes' rebellion, the British Government tells everyone that the bombers are coming. Everyone clears out. On first thoughts this appears an incongruous way of inflicting punishment, till one realises the immense inconvenience in winter of having to upsticks from your huts and towers and drive your flocks and old folk and women out into the cold till the bombing is over.

A curious story confirming this comes from Swat, a valley beyond the Malakand Pass, on the North-west Frontier of India. There in territory within the British

sphere of influence and order, but not within the administered area, a Government bridge had been built on a caravan route, so that camels carts and even cars might cross what at times was otherwise impassable. Several young exclusionists were annoyed thereat, and determined to blow up the bridge. But it was late autumn, winter draws on, the wind in the valleys blows more than the chill. The bold plans of the young men came to the women's ears. A blown up bridge to the young men, was but a lark and a feather in their tribal caps. To the women it meant bombs among the huts and towers, bombs among the stores of winter grain, nights in the open for them and their bairns.

"Not good enough," thought they, and so they took their bedding and their cooking pots and what-nots to the bridge and camped on the roadway thereof, so that any blowing up by their own youth should include them and thus be out of the question. After a few days the elders rose in their wrath demanding their women back, cuffing shrewdly the young men aforesaid. The bridge survived and it is evident that warning the people before you come with your bombs and your machine guns is not such a mug's plan as first appears. It is evident to all and sundry who handle the problem, that air flying on the frontier has its useful as well as lawful occasions.

On the other hand when the tribes and clans mean war, and are out for a fight, that is another matter. On clansmen holding hill-tops and passes, located among big boulders or jagged rocks, the bomb has little effect. It does the defenders very little harm and becomes an object of derision, while the unexploded bombs give useful material for fresh designs on bridges. The tribesmen are wont to deposit their head-dresses and a heaped blanket as representing themselves while the real defender is chuckling to himself at a safe distance. When serious work has to be done the plane moves back to the rôle of a valuable auxiliary.

The work of extricating tribesmen from trench and cave is not done by plane or even by howitzer but in the last resource by the same enduring old infantry with their bayonet and periwinkle trick. They have, too, another ally not connected with the Air Force. In a recent frontier trouble, when it was all over, and the pow-wow of peace was taking place, amid the bandying of frontier compliments, an officer of the Air Force said, "Look here, Khan-ji, I am sorry to have bombed your caves so persistently, but I was determined to get you out."

"Get me out indeed!" said the indignant chief, "It would take more than you to get us out of those caves. It was the fleas."

That perhaps is by the way, but the point is that when tempers are up and it is something more than bringing people to their senses before it has come to push of pike, the Air Force on tribal frontiers is not a final arm, and when it comes to actual war it is a great ally but a subsidiary. In fact, it is not unlike in the last stage the Navy, which for all its *Queen Elizabeths* and suchlike, does not sail on land. It is the foot soldier with his hand grenade, his bayonet, or his barbed wire pick-helve who is the ultimate exponent. Bombs from the air may be like shells from Naval guns on land, terrible to witness, but singularly ineffective in fact.

But when we leave tribal war and come to *Grand Guerre*, in the peculiarities of the Defence of India, is again another matter. It is not too much to say that had there been a considerable modern Air Force in India, the impudent invasion of the Khaiber region by Amanullah in 1919 or his lieutenant, the late King Nadir Shah's incursion into the Kurram Valley would have been physically impossible. No troops in the face of an Air Force in being, can ever pass long defiles. The horror that overtook the Turks fleeing to the fords of Jordan before Allenby down the Waddy Farah, settled that.



It may be confidently said at present, that the use of police planes is an immense improvement on anything yet available for the lesser military services on our own and the French wilder Frontiers. In this connection it should, however, be realised that there is *not yet one fighting Squadron* in India, to meet any Russian threats from the air.

It is equally obvious that neither Japan nor China can get on without them. The relieving of Manchukuo of her astounding banditry can only be done in conjunction with planes, while it seems just possible that if she can organise an efficient air force China may be able to control her war lords. It seems the one hope of a modern China taking the place of the Manchus who alone maintained any complete though obsolescent hold.

The conclusion in this matter is that until the Angel of Peace will descend on all minds or is admitted to all hearts, an Air Force is too useful an arm to be surrendered. This incubus of a third dimension in which war is possible, has fastened its expenditure on an unwilling world, and incidentally has produced a very wonderful class of men, for whom since the Spanish Main and Francis Drake passed away, the world has found no adequate rôle.

#### THE SEA AND AIR CONTROVERSY

There is every sign that in the renewed controversy between sea and air power, which the revival of anxiety over our defensive arrangements has engendered, the contest of wits and pens will be acute. It deserves to be so if of the right sort. It is quite beyond the power of laymen to decide the merits of the discussion. If the sea-wing of the Air Force is to be as it is now and become more and more part and parcel of the Navy, then we may feel that the question will be settled without the least suspicion of axe-grinding. The problem just stated as to



what is the precise danger to our ports and their approaches, and to ships convoyed or otherwise needs an early solution. It, like other War perils, must be faced however unbearable the thought.

To hide our heads in the sands and say that more war is unthinkable will not help us. We may believe that unless the world insists on building a challenging offensive fleet as Germany did, battleships are dead. If we agree that alive or dead the submarine or the air-plane have replaced them, *bon!* We can stick to the one, build the other who will. But there is this trouble, as in the case of the barking dog, who bit the boy after the master had told him a dog can't both bark *and* bite; the dog didn't know it! If we decide that the submarine and the plane are such that the battleship can't live with them, again *bon!*—I but use the *cliché* of Marshal Foch . . . but let us be sure that the battleship knows it also. Some of these d . . . d sailors are so *méchant* and won't obey any rule except to hit as hard as they can.

Can ships defend ports? If not, what or who can? Can ships on the high seas escape from planes, if so how? If not what about it? Some very hard thinking is needed. But again as already said, the matter is one for very expert examination, and most of the inexpert who write glibly do not know some of the essential governing facts in each case.

Also, let it again be said that the expert is not the 'stickit minister' of the services, the man who is not thought by his fellows to be as valuable as he thinks, and who must tell the world through the Press that he alone knows. But if it be true that the air can or shortly will be master of them all, it is time we should frame our steps that way. When, however, we think of all that Britain stands for on the seas, it is hard to imagine that the most perfect air service in the world can do what the war-shipping has to be responsible for.

## CHAPTER IX

### BRITAIN'S ARMED NEEDS BY LAND

The Pre-War Military Forces—The Military Needs of the Empire  
—The Military Requirement of India—The Form of our Military  
Forces of the Future.

#### THE PRE-WAR MILITARY FORCES

THE Navy had as its rule, the "Two Power" Standard explained, simple to follow, simple to shout in the streets, but the Army was based on a still less tangible standard. After the Napoleonic War the fear of War in Europe, so far as Britain was concerned, seems to have passed, the garrisoning of England and the supplying of her small wars appeared the only purpose. Since the cessation of the military occupation of Paris after Waterloo, the British Army had not been called on to march across the Continent of Europe, though the way was familiar enough. The Crimea can hardly be called Europe, and is in fact part of Asiatic Tartary.

So when the more modern short service Army came into being the duty of the Army units in England was to supply drafts for those that garrisoned the Empire. The South African War, which required a considerable force, was the first trial of the modern British system, that had grafted the Continental method of mobilization from reserves on to the long service that an overseas army really required. The requirements of that war included and made necessary a call on a considerable number of Britain's second-line troops, in the shape of the heterogeneous jumble of

militia, yeomanry, and volunteers, all free-will troops of no definite military formation, which then existed.

But as the modern Europe was shaping and the loom of the late war cast its unmistakable shadow, it became necessary to face the fact that a British Army might be required on the Continent of Europe. Yet no British prosperity-monger could be got to face the true facts. To speak of Germany as the world's danger was to be howled down. Lord Roberts was regarded as a fine old gentleman in his dotage. Agadir, the trouble between Germany and France in 1911, did, it is true, shake ministerial complacency, and the war preparation of the Navy did go forward thoroughly.

But the Army problem was never faced. The soldiers, however, saw that such dibs and dabs of troops as we had, could, by slight re-adjustments, and a certain amount of equipment, be organised to make a force of six divisions of the Army and six cavalry brigades—if the Reserve System of man and horse worked properly—available for despatch to any desirable quarter. It was also accepted that for the moment it was in France and Belgium where British help might be needed.

The Army authorities worked more than hard, with the result that all the world knows. Four of the six divisions were sent to France, Lord Kitchener and the Ministry jibbed at sending the other two as planned, and so Lord French stood to the strain of contact and buffer to a vast and overpowering German multitude with *one third of his tiny force missing*. That he and his corps commanders gave those German hordes the surprise of their lives is ancient history. That this highly-trained prætorian force inflicted very heavy losses, indeed, on the inexperienced troops that tried to swamp it, all the world knows. What it would have done if it had not been deprived of a third of its available force can hardly be calculated.

However, that is all thrice told history. The point that

we are concerned with here is that it was not an army maintained and based on the careful estimation of our probable needs. Not in the least! It just happened, because we had always had about that particular number of men in our standing army in the United Kingdom. That was all.

Then, we must remember, came Lord Haldane, the able war minister, who without being at all competent to consider military possibilities, saw that three unorganized forces serving under different conditions and liabilities, the Militia, Yeomanry and Volunteers, could not be welded as they stood, into any kind of efficient second line military formations. He succeeded in sweeping them into his new Territorial Force.

Here again there was no basis on which numbers were calculated. There were enough to make with the help of paste and scissors, fourteen divisions and fourteen 'mounted' brigades. The term 'mounted' brigade was one introduced into our parlance to denote troops who would fight to some extent on horse or on foot. Cavalry brigades were those trained to act principally mounted, to break into an enemy, as Murat and Seidlitz would have done, by force of manœuvre and contact, with a strategical as well as a tactical rôle. All European military opinion thought that this rôle would still emerge in War.

Mr. Haldane's organizing flare was great, or perhaps his power of knowing what advice was worth taking. His Territorial Force absorbed most of what was good in the old and ever-to-be-revered Volunteers Force and Yeomanry. It was marred in that the men were only enlisted for home defence, as has been explained, with the grave disability that this produced.<sup>1</sup> Other troubles were those of expenditure; they were equipped on the cheap, and wanted a good deal of the component equipments necessary. It was this as also explained, that made the formation of the 'Kitchener'

<sup>1</sup> V. Chapter III.

divisions, the first object of the War Office under his regime.

One thing Lord Haldane failed in. In killing the old Constitutional Force, the Militia, in favour of the more-vote-catching town Volunteers, he killed a valuable asset. It was the 'thing' for the County folk to serve in Militia and Yeomanry; *noblesse oblige*, by old stately custom, and of reverence for a force that was hardly under Parliament. This psychological affection could not be transferred to the Territorials in its entirety, and the force is still the loser thereby. Lord Haldane, however, did not overlook the needs, as have so many other organizers, essential to all armies, of a draft producing frame-work. He retained some of the old Militia battalions as a draft-producing machinery for maintaining the Regular battalions in the field. It was most valuable, but as the old name Militia was stupidly not connected therewith, it brought with it little of the established goodwill of that Force into its new guise as "Special Reserve".

After the War, in which experience in forming new 'behind-the-line' formations was so rich, the draft machinery was not considered necessary. So the last trace of the old 'Milish,' as it was affectionately called, has gone. Now that the thousands of trained men are growing old, machinery that will bring to the Expeditionary Force any trained drafts to replace those casualties that commence from the day of mobilization, will have to be created. Only surplus reservists and half-trained recruits will be available.

From this nucleus of six regular divisions grew up the vast organization for war which Britain eventually put into the field. The Air Force, then the Royal Flying Corps, hardly existed at all before the World War and there were no accepted data or rule of thumb to guide the post-war organizers therein.

That was the pre-war position. What are the post-war requirements?

## THE MILITARY NEEDS OF THE EMPIRE

Since Britain is a Colonial power as well as a Continental one, her normal war requirements apply to the protection of her over-seas possessions and the overseas members of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Since, by general consent of civilization, *Grande Guerre* at any rate from 1918 to 1934, is abolished and outlawed, Great Britain has even less of a call for a Continental army than here to fore. We have seen that the pre-war continental army was based on no main policy, but was of the nature of a grant-in-aid, to the extent, to which existing circumstances made troops available.

Those circumstances chanced, as explained, with a little trimming, to make up the Expeditionary Force. Until the ghost of *Grande Guerre* is permitted to walk the earth, our Continental liabilities would seem to be but the need for taking part, by a token contingent, in some gesture of the pacific powers against some breaker of treaty and pact. To do this we follow the same principle or want of principle as before. We take what our Colonial system leaves in Britain and we make the most we can of it. We have not even remained at our pre-war army strength.

The so-called Irish settlement took away from the Army a large number of its most famous units, that had carried, always cheering, the Union Flag from the Great Wall of China to the Flats of Flanders and they have not been replaced. It deprived Ireland of the great character-building and experience-giving opportunities of serving in the British Army, of the Harp with the Crown with Molly Malone Ahone! the first to burn the barracks. "Did iver ye see the like o' that?" but it was so, and many there be who mourn.

Out of what remains, we can with difficulty, find, as a contingent, four divisions of infantry and artillery. This

is the British balance of mobile force, to re-inforce the Empire or make a token contribution in Europe.

The Irish fiasco was partly hidden by the policy of reduction for which it gave an opportunity. Instead of raising new corps or maintaining the Irish Corps of the Line as we do the Irish Guards, we have reduced the Army. It was a useful peace gesture and move for economy. Perhaps, if all goes well, the residue is just enough. Let us, therefore, look at the Empire's oversea needs.

Whatever the Continental position, obviously for the present, the immediate needs of the Empire in military forces, has returned to pre-German-war-cloud conditions. Those are the maintenance of the Empire, and its frontiers, and the stability of the partly-civilized world that impinges on our interests, and those of the Asiatic races within the Commonwealth. During the post-war years, we have twice been called on to stabilize matters in that great cosmopolitan world-settlement of Shanghai. We have twice sent troops into Palestine. We have sent them to Iraq, and there are many places where the same contingencies may arise. We have, as has been said, about two-thirds of the pre-war troops to do it with.

We need not discuss here the various potentialities which the post-war Asiatic position may have left us in. Iraq alone is a possibility for adverse happenings of many kinds. An inflated Persia, and some Russian intrigue have lately produced an outrageous attempt to jump British rights in the Anglo-Persian Company's oil fields. Fortunately, John Bull, contrary to expectation, stood up on behalf of his trades, in spite of Foreign Office using its most unsuitable weapons and the possum came down even then. This attempt, had it been successful, would have meant a large number of men out of work at Avonmouth.

There are many such situations, which, while not necessarily calling for the use of troops and warships, are only possible to handle if the Asiatic mind will realise that these



are available if need be. It is the need of commerce and employment, as has been reiterated here, that compel us to hold to what we rightfully have, and keep the means available to do so.

Suffice it there to say here in this connection, that our very small Army of to-day has more to be responsible for if need be, than at any time within the last hundred years, and as a character and citizen building machine, it too is 'worth the money'.

The outstanding position with regard to overseas responsibility of our Regular Army has always been India; and the re-garrisoning of India after the Indian Mutiny and since the approach of Russia has been a formidable drag. Indeed the needs for re-inforcing India on occasion, is still one of the major problems, while the yearly toll of drafts to maintain the 60,000 troops in that vast continent has always made the work of maintaining an army in being in Britain an extraordinarily difficult matter. The strain it puts on the officers and training establishments in Britain are in many ways colossal. Without the reservist the admirable young corps in this country are not fighting concerns.

However, that is part and parcel of all Continental systems, and has long been accepted without a murmur. In the crisis before the War, however, the British General Staff began to feel that the British Army at Home had something more to exist for than the maintenance of drafts and reinforcements for India. Happily the wonderful efficiency of the reservists and mobilization machine did succeed in sending into Europe the finest spear-head to a national Army that the world had yet seen.

The military problems of India are a study by themselves and must be glanced at here before we can voice conclusions.

One point to remember is this, viz. that the maintenance of India being the prime consideration, it has always been



held that despite the disabilities referred to, it was more economical and advantageous to pass the drafts for abroad through the corps at Home than to maintain separate training battalions for that purpose, since to some extent, two birds were thus killed with one stone. The success of the reserve system, the magnificence of the reservists has proved the wisdom of what has been so long tried and which organization has perfected. Often and often has the system known as the 'Cardwell' system been attacked. It is easy to attack it, but it is not easy to carry the attack home, as no one can devise a system that so well serves an *en-tout-cas* role. The actual principles and forms on which our military forces shall be organized and equipped in the future is another matter altogether.

#### THE MILITARY NEEDS AND THE WAR FEARS OF INDIA

For over a century the main military danger to India has been the attitude of Russia, who has steadily absorbed the Central Asian Khanates. Since 1881 the attitude of Britain towards Afghanistan has been that of an Ally, who would protect her frontier against what has been called 'The loom of the Bear'. In 1885 as already related, the Indian Army was mobilized to give effect to that alliance, in consequence of a Russian attack on Afghan Frontier troops. Russia was and is the prime enemy. The secondary enemy has been the inhabitants of the thousand miles of frontier hills which lie between the British-administered territory and the frontier of Afghanistan. They can produce some 200,000 armed and warlike men, and in 1897 were profoundly stirred by fanatical agitators, and political mischief makers. It took 60,000 British Indian troops to restore peace. Since then the tribesmen are a hundred per cent better armed and have been disturbed by many conflicting movements.

During the World War, the conduct of our loyal ally,

Habibullah, Amir of Kabul, helped to keep the Frontier quiet, although the derelict arms of Turkey and of Russia drifted steadily into the mountains. But in February, 1919 Habibullah Khan was murdered, and his third son Amanullah succeeded in seizing the throne.

Then followed an event which made the problem and the defence of India most acute. For forty years our military developments, especially those undertaken during the years of Lord Kitchener's tenure of the office of commander-in-chief, had been based on the understanding that Afghanistan was our ally, in danger of Russian aggression. But in 1919 the young Amanullah, insecure on his throne, launched his army, which was angry and suspicious at his father's death, in an invasion of British India. The British India Army was demobilizing. The British troops in India were all time-expired. Nevertheless they had to be hurried back to the Frontier. Two Afghan armies, one under the lately murdered Nadir Shah, invaded India. They were kicked back again as fast as they had come, but with considerable loss of life to the Anglo-Indian Army, from heat as well as from battle. Further, the whole of thirty years' work of pacification and civilization of the Frontier hills was practically wiped out.

From this time forth, we have once again to take heed of a somewhat Balkanized Afghanistan as one of the potential war storms. We may have to face Russia, in protection of Afghanistan, alliance or no alliance, or we may even have to face the two in an unholy combination, with 200,000 armed tribesmen for auxiliaries, with all the imagined wealth of India as their guerdon.

On the Oxus the Sovietization, with terrible cruelties, that the last ten years have seen has brought many anxieties and difficulties in its train. In place of the Imperial 'Grey-coat guard on the Oxus ford' we have a series of Soviets, while across the Oxus in Afghan Turkistan we have similar races to those grouped in Soviets the other side. This is

not an easy situation, and is one that keep the military organization of India constantly on the *qui vive*, and its General Staff at high tension.

India has other military problems. The lesser ones amid 3,000 miles of Eastern and North Eastern Frontier do not matter. But Nepaul, our staunch ally since the fierce Nepaul War of 1815, cannot be omitted from military calculations, under circumstances different from now. The ambitions of China vis-a-vis Tibet, are a constant anxiety, while the Muhammadan Chinese province Yunnan contiguous to Burma is not a negligible factor with China in disruption.

In addition to external enemies, the bitter feeling between Hindu and Moslem that Mr. Montague has stirred, demands the presence of many thousand British troops to restrain it.

The major ever-present problem is the preservation of the integrity of Afghanistan, and when possible the maintenance of the most friendly relations with her. The comparative civilization or Balkanization aforesaid, of Afghanistan has increased rather than lessened the military problem. It but means a better armed potential enemy.

It cannot be too vividly before us that an independent Afghanistan as a buffer state is an essential to our position in India and to the prosperity of India herself.

#### THE MILITARY FORCES OF INDIA TO-DAY

The regular forces in India to-day consist of some 60,000 Europeans, and 130,000 Indian troops added to a considerable number of troops in the Princes India of varying efficiency. This is to protect and preserve internal order in a country of 1,800,000 square miles and 353 million peoples, with a thousand miles of N.W. tribal frontier of daily anxiety, and three to four thousand miles of N.E. and E. Frontier of lesser anxiety but of possibilities. The resources from which soldiers are drawable are not so many.

It was calculated in 1917, when the British Government asked the Government of India to raise half a million more troops, that, of the Martial races, viz. those who had heart and physique for the profession of arms, there were not more than 35 millions of all ages and sexes. That meant, but, perhaps five million who could possibly serve as soldiers. The story of the races of India, martial and otherwise, is a curious one, and indeed one from which all the history and all the difficulties of India really arise.

Those non-conversant with military problems may still have heard the phrase, Indianization of the Indian Army. That means that in future some of the Indian regiments instead of having a dozen British and about eighteen Indian officers, will have all Indians as the years roll on. How far this will be successful, only experience can say. Up till some ten years ago all corps had this superior cadre of British officers, to whom alone the fighting reputation of the Indian soldier is attributable so far as training and leading the willing material goes. This measure of advance was, however, ripe for introduction experimentally.

A modern Army of this size, small though it is, for the area and responsibilities involved, is a costly business. But the dangers to be met are very great, and the Indian Army finds itself taking part in some form of unsought war every year. The readiness with which the Indian Army sends troops to other Imperial theatres of war, is but paralleled by the readiness with which Britain and in future no doubt the Empire as a whole, will rally to the needs of India.

The British garrison in India has been reduced by 10,000 men as compared with 1914, and considerable reductions, almost below the margin of safety, have taken place since 1918 here also in the Indian Corps.

China is one of the theatres to which in the past Indian troops have often been sent, with conspicuous success.

In these cases extra expenses are always borne by the Imperial Government save, as during the World War, when India bore a large share.

It pleases the Indian politician, who so enjoys talking of matters he little understands, to gird, for no adequate reason, at the despatch of Indian troops elsewhere. But the soldiers of India eagerly seek the duty. In the World War, the heavy losses in which it was necessary to involve them, was a pathetic necessity, and but a tribute to the belief that 'if England goes then all goes'. But Indian troops are only lent by the Indian Government, whatever it may be. Primarily the Army in India exists for the military defence and safety of India only, internal and external, and since India was 'montagued', in the protection of one community from another, which the bitter communal animosity that his 'reforms' stirred up has called for. In these troubles it is the protection of the European troops that is eagerly and pitifully sought. Indian troops are rarely used, lest they, too, take fire in the communal conflagration.

#### THE FORM OF OUR FUTURE MILITARY FORCES

Now and again the public is intrigued when some retired senior of the Army turns to tell it in the best prose that he is capable of, of the follies of the War Office in maintaining our obsolete pre-war military formations, when all the world knows that they are ludicrous anachronisms. The public and the Press may be stirred thereby, or they may not. But what is the truth of all or any of these diatribes? Regarding form as distinct from numbers, there are several germane military facts. The first is perhaps this. At present no staff officer outside the ranks of the Heavenly Host could possibly tell you the form into which modern military and civil inventions will crystallize military formations.

Secondly, the civilized world has spent the last fifteen years in trying to eliminate *Grande Guerre* from the list of world sports. Until this attempt is finally dubbed a failure, which is not yet, no Power has formed its opinion as to how it will conduct its death dealing activities, nor how it will resist those of its enemies. The military formations that were extant at the end of the War and the encadrement of the young men of the day in them, duly following the lesser lessons for their efficient use, is what every Power for the moment contents itself with. We cannot, for instance, imagine France turning all her battalions into tank corps, while herself proposing that tanks shall be abolished, with an international inspectorate for smelling out the illegal existence of such.

Nobody knows yet what defensive or offensive arms, equipments or units are wanted, or how quite to use them. Improve your anti-aircraft artillery, yes! Study the type and use the tank, yes! Have a small nucleus, yes! Order thousands! By Geneva No! The same train of argument applies to every military nostrum. The fuller use of the tank cannot yet be accepted with Benito Mussolini also preaching to get rid of them, and so forth. But because the existing form of unit keeps the troops in splendid discipline and adaptability no one can suggest a better way of standing by. A battalion of any British corps could in a very short while be switched on to take over with *éclat* any new equipment, role or form.

A third military reason is this. The normal role of the British army as has just been pointed out, is the protection of our territories and interests throughout the world. The battalion, brigade and division with artillery as now, is for the moment the best way of doing this, if even for the simple reason that they exist as a first class going concern, with all the side issues intact. No expert for the moment with all the facts at his disposal can give you any cut and dried scheme to replace them. It is

probable that if, at this moment, the Secretary of State for War and Chancellor of the Exchequer were to apologise for all their neglect in the past, and say to the Chief of the General Staff, "Have what you want my boy! Dip your hand heartily into the tax-payers bag!" that the most that that startled chief would ask for is some of the latest equipments on the market, say automatic rifles and such like for the improvement of the existing units.

You would be quite near the story of the three wishes and the black puddings, so obscure are major military issues at the moment, so easy is it to run up the wrong pole to the tune of heavy expenditure. You might almost say, whatever you do, you will be sorry for! Is it to be wondered therefore, that the wise men sit very tight and say very little, but content themselves with having everything that exists in the best possible order, happy in the feeling that the young men of the Force are in better heart and more versatile than ever they were.

Even such antediluvian ideas as a good regiment of cavalry would probably be far more useful in many of the terrain for which we have responsibility than all the one-man tanks in the world. Pack Artillery, for instance, on the India Frontiers, Infantry on the Afghan Hills may be an old-fashioned idea, but no new one has yet come forward to take their place for many of the jobs that may be waiting.

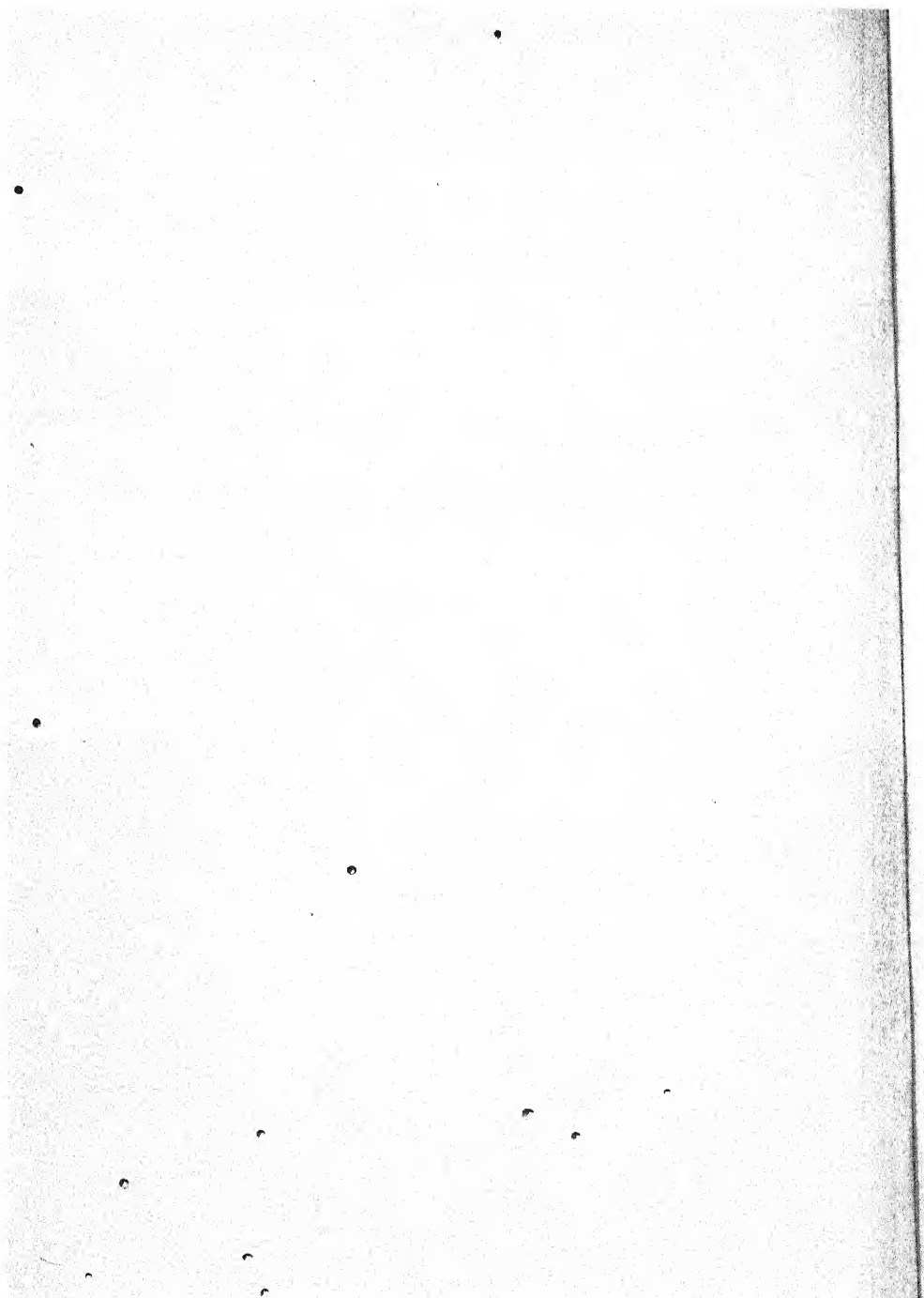
It is not, *pace* the critics, as if the General Staffs were not keeping pace with fore-ward thought, but for tactical purposes, the jewel is still in the lotus. The General Staffs of other Powers are in exactly the same position. It is not too much to say that our responsible military authorities are satisfied that for the moment the forces for which they have to answer are for the most part suited to our immediate needs. More than that they certainly could not say.



III

THE WAY OF PEACE





## CHAPTER X

### THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER

Concerning War—Concerning the League of Nations—Concerning  
Disarmament—Concerning France—Concerning Germany—Con-  
cerning Russia—Concerning the Far East—Concerning the  
United States—Concerning Ourselves

#### CONCERNING WAR

LET us hear the conclusion of the whole matter, "Fear God . . . and keep your powder dry, for that is the whole duty of man". This is no irreverent paraphrase of Koheleth, but the motto that must apply to every component part of the Commonwealth of Peoples. In other words each component must be prepared to do its duty, and be able to support its duty by something more than words. It must be recognised that war, like cancer and tuberculosis, is one of the evils of the world, to be guarded against and minimized. The hiding of your head in the sand, the pretending that war is not a factor of the world, is a shirking of duty, a hiding of the shirk behind platitudes. Ideals beautiful perhaps, at best are but slowly attainable.

Accepting that, allowing our young people to know that war is an evil to be first countered by wisdom and failing that by war; then we may be set out fairly safely on the way of Peace.

We may safely assert that there is no immediate danger of war if Europe faces facts, but that there may be unless the Commonwealth of Europe, nay of the world, puts

its house in order. Germany is as yet in no condition to make war, but if not rightly handled may become so. France wants no war, but could be provoked thereto by German folly. But she is not going to reduce her armaments unless the world guarantees to *her* satisfaction, not *theirs*, that she shall not be over-run again, by a more populous neighbour.

There is one uncontrolled factor whose conduct conforms to no known rule, and whose internal factors may even defy by their own weight and loss of balance, the efforts to control them of the rulers that she has. Russia is the one real danger, on whom all eyes should rest, and whatever may be said at the League tables, *prevents Europe from disarming*.

#### CONCERNING DISARMAMENT

The inevitable conclusion seems to be that disarmament as envisaged by enthusiasts is not practical politics and that the Disarmament Conference is dead. From the welter of ineffective proposals the following points may emerge.

- (1) That further reductions may be possible unless Germany be going berserk.
- (2) That certain forms of war, submarines, gas bombing, the bombardment of undefended capitals, may be outlawed by general consent.
- (3) That the distinction between offensive and defensive armaments is a chimera that should be dropped, but that any conventions can usefully follow the terms of the preceding clause. Under it, if all concerned agreed, heavy tanks or iron rations or any other objectionable item might be eliminated.
- (4) That any form of serious international control of an agreement, and inspection, would be unbearable to any self-respecting great Power, in fact contrary to human nature and human susceptibilities.

- (5) That internationalization of the Air, though to some extent supported by the fraternizations of the world's flyers and the mutual assistance they give each other . . . a phenomenon strangely noticeable even during the war in the air—is like disarmament, not practical politics. It may, however, be on its way hereafter.
- (6) That the Asiatic and African powers, such as Britain and France, should be recognized as unable to subscribe to an agreement that prohibited the use of 'police' armaments, even if the banning of such in *Grand Guerre* is accepted by all. On the other hand, stipulations would be readily given, and it might be accepted that armament so maintained should not be used in 'civilized war'.

## CONCERNING FRANCE

France stands afraid—afraid of the nation beside her who apart from anything else has a much larger population, with a fierce programme of early marriage and uncontrolled conception. She stands grim, armed and determined. There she will stand till as just said, some one relieves her of her fear. Britain is undoubtedly *perfidie* in that she allows her foreign policy to wobble, to get into the hands of supremely ignorant socialist leaders. If one Government in Britain were to guarantee her security another may change the policy inconsequently. In the eyes of more rational folk England appears congenitally *perfidie*.

Finance demands that France shall reduce her expenditure. Fear says no! The *status quo*, modified perhaps at the round table, the maintenance of the League of Nations, if on a better and more accepted footing, might cause her to reduce her armaments, but disarm! *jamais! nevaire!* And this for reasons that the world can only see to be just. The ferocities of Hitler's utterances but justify her attitude.

Because she is armed and a keen supporter of the League's authority, she for the moment stands as the stable force behind the League. Perhaps, as has been said, for the peace of the last ten years we may say, Thank God for France!

#### CONCERNING GERMANY

- (1) That all the harsh words said of Germany of the past have been deserved; that the suffering of the children for the sins of the fathers is a world law and condition that cannot be avoided, but that all can be forgiven if not forgotten, by meek and candid behaviour.
- (2) That Germany is still a convict under police supervision, that she is lucky not to be in closer confinement, and that just as she was about to have earned her release, she has committed herself again, and incurred the grave suspicion of those of her jailors who would otherwise have freed her.
- (3) That even convicts are eventually freed from police supervision, and that young and growing Germany must be given a clean sheet, and must have some measure of equality restored to her by common consent. *But that all reasonable attitude towards her is rendered impossible if the fierce repeated all-conquering aspirations out of Hitler's own mouth have any sort of meaning behind them.*
- (4) That if she arms, and does not return to the League of Nations duress may be put on her, and that there is no machinery whereby the question of her colonies could possibly be considered except by the League at the Council Table. *In fact her surreptitious re-arming and drilling must cease or the world must follow suit.*
- (5) That she must realise that the Conference which she so abruptly left was a Disarmament and

not a Re-armament Conference. Further she is of a nature that answers best to a blow, and the sooner she gets it by word and threat of deed, the happier for her.

#### CONCERNING RUSSIA

Russia by general admission is in a class by herself of which the world has no experience, but the following points seem to stand forth.

- (1) That Russia's position outside the world's comity is disastrous to herself and harmful to the world, and that the sooner she can be brought in the better.
- (2) But that as long as she declares herself the world's leader in destructive socialism and slaughter of all who disagree, and so long as she conducts a large system of convict labour and cruel coercion, the world does not want her.
- (3) That her Army is a danger to the world's peace.
- (4) That her Five Years plan, cannot possibly succeed so far as external dumping is intended, as even complacent and egregious Britain is not going to allow her own industries to be ruined by black-leg competition. And lest labour, hypnotized, prick up its ears and jib, let it be asked "what can be more black-leg than labour working with the fear of the noose and the revolver, and much of it living on a dietary which even the most destitute in this country would not face?"
- (5) That because of these things, Russia can only be considered the danger spot of the world. And this is why some reasoning folk say: 'Thank God for Hitler!' the screen that keeps Russia and her ways from Europe.

- (6) That her open hostility to Britain which for generations was worshipped by her reformers as the home of justice, and freedom, and her meddling in every sewer to be found in the British Empire is one of the factors impeding her own and the world's prosperity.

#### CONCERNING THE FAR EAST

There are interesting conclusions that jump to the eye as one digests the main elements of the Eastern story.

First of all comes the hard fact that while a League of Nations may conceivably control by consent the stabilized destinies of Europe, it is fairly obvious that the Far East has not yet run into a mould that can be said to be final. No League can exercise a control over nations and peoples that have yet to find themselves. It cannot be said that either Japan or China have reached this stage. The main facts that we have to put in our pipe and smoke in this connection seem to be:

- (1) That China while in need of all countenance and help, cannot be regarded as a going concern so far as normal negotiations go. That Nanking has a long way to go before she can achieve that, and a very great deal to learn.
- (2) That probably a developed Air Force will be her best means of getting the whole area outside Manchukuo under one control, and that the abolition of military airplanes will not be a welcome proposal unless China can come within, as she well might, the police provisions that Britain and France must have.
- (3) That there is no need why we should ever again permit that vicious and hysterical boycott of our trade which was so disastrous ten years ago, which

official Russia and possibly, privately, United States interests, had a hand in.

- (4) That there is every room for friendship between Britain and China, for many reasons, but perhaps more than any other in the mutual pride of their merchants in honest trading. And, after all, as the Chinese Ambassador recently remarked, 'we are the same colour'.
- (5) That Japan, disappointed of support from Britain, dismayed at the hot-airdom of the League when dealing with her hard facts, will stay out; with her will go the feeling of most Britons of 'quite right too'.
- (6) That her trade aspirations and methods are a very great danger not only in themselves but for the enmity their countering must engender.
- (7) That her attitude and power are very useful 'think agains' so far as Russia and even the United States are concerned.
- (8) That perhaps the world may even say 'Thank God for Japan.'

#### CONCERNING THE UNITED STATES

There are some very definite conclusions to be arrived at regarding the United States. They are.

- (1) That some very permanent mentality behind the scenes dreams of tipping John Bull from his throne on the sea, martial and otherwise, and that its private interests have no scruples as to the means they employ.
- (2) That perfectly natural *ripostes* to protect ourselves must inevitably produce exasperation.
- (3) That the vast amount of sentimental feeling, in the good sense of the word, in the States does not act upon this intention at all. That however great



the goodwill of the English American, he is not in these days the United States.

- (4) That the greatest goodwill in the world does not easily withstand a persistent clash of interests, and that the game of civilization, the keeping of feelings aroused by such clash in due bounds, will be a task that the greatest of our statesmen will find difficult.
- (5) That the kindly regard which Britain feels for the States is rarely reciprocated by them as an entity, however citizens themselves may feel it.
- (6) That to give up our friendship with our former Ally, Japan, for the sake of developing a better understanding with the States is a doubtful quest for an unattainable object, or rather an object which so far as it goes can equally well be obtained in other ways.
- (7) That the United States, quite apart from their present difficulties, have a difficult row to hoe in the Far East, and that every endeavour to support their reasonable demands and outlook is not unworthy of us, without harming Japan.
- (8) That a complete accord with no *arrière pensée* between the British Commonwealth and the United States would be the finest thing that the world's future could look for, but that sacrifices for that end need to be on both sides and not on one. May we then say 'Thank God for the United States?' We ought to be able to do so, if the States would let us.
- (9) That probably, as already said, a League of Far Eastern Nations would be to the advantage of all.

## CONCERNING OURSELVES

And now what of yourselves John and Sandy? Nay and Mike even though having lost his ticket he is travelling for a while under the seat? What are we to make of the night. Is it plaguery dark? Not a bit of it, it is fairly light, if in faith you hold your hand. The main points for Britain as seen by the outside observer, seem to be much as follows:

- (1) For a great many years you have held the hand of the lesser peoples of the world and they know it. You were even the admiration of such intelligence as lay in Russia. You held the whole world by the hand in the World War. Almost alone you held it, waiting for the United States to come slowly up the slopes of civilization. What is more, in doing so, so great was your strength of which both you and the world had such imperfect knowledge, that you did not fall beyond recuperation point. In fact, so much did Providence seem to fight on your side in many strange ways, that you might almost say with the British Israelite 'surely ye are the people'. You have and you did, a great duty to the world, and you have that duty still to do.

The saying of the Arab in Mesopotamia now hackneyed, but a true saying, that if the English lost the War Truth and Justice would leave the World, was a tribute to the *Palaver Inglisi*. Even if overstated, it was at least a tribute to your tradition and endeavours.

- (2) Because it was so, it still is so, and you alone almost of the Nations have a stable government and a non-excitabile people. You owe to the world the same duty as before, the sacredness of the given word, the glory of the scrap of paper.

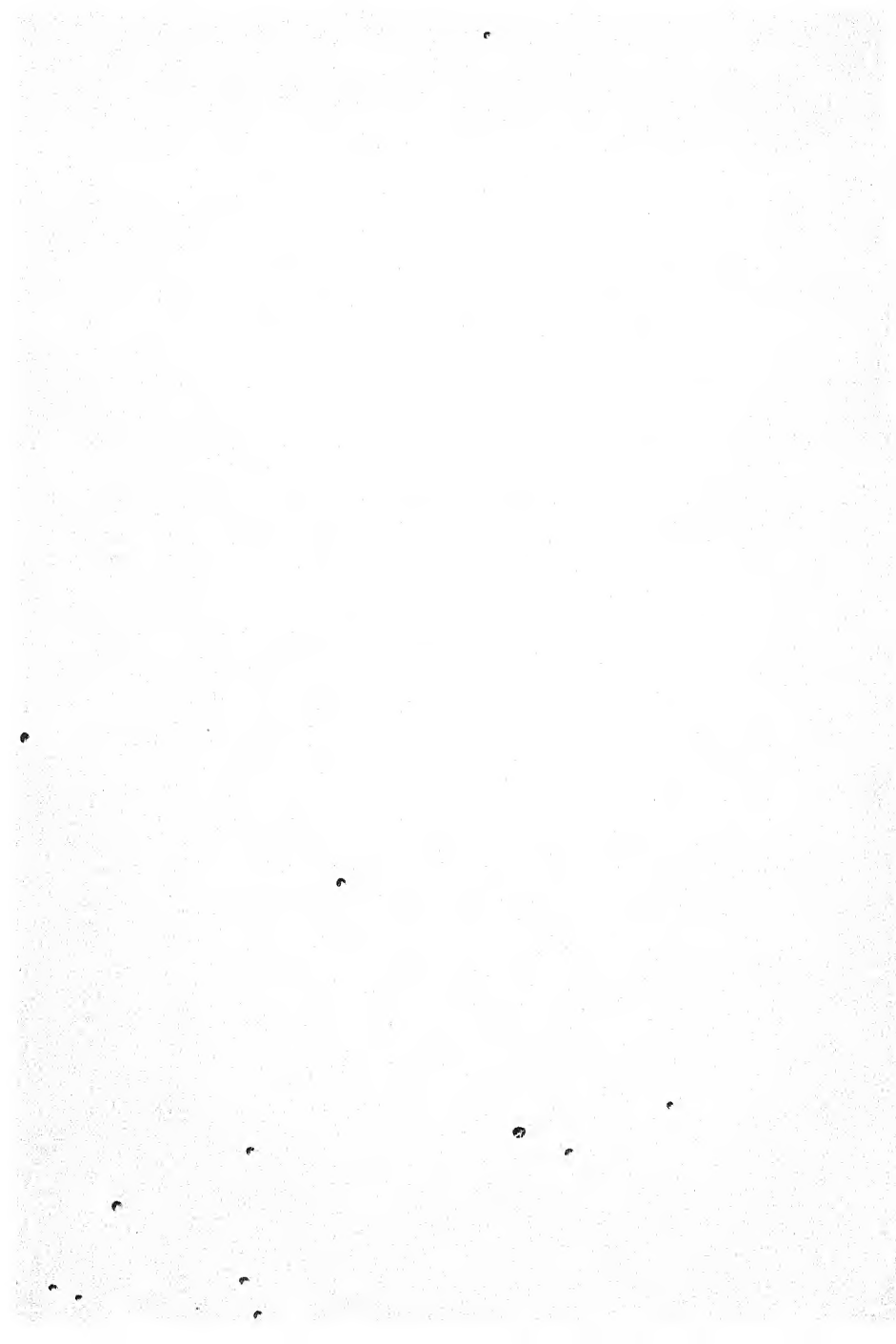
But because it is so, it is your duty to the world

to be strong enough to play the same role; nobody listens to the poor relation. Therefore, these are the old words for Great Britain that once was the United Kingdom, "Trust in God and keep your powder dry".

- (3) You have been wise, even if by chance, in keeping close to the margin of safety in armaments while the world recovered from the war. But the time has now come, unless very great promptness to disarm is shown in Europe, to put your Navy and your Air Force on proper lines. Your country now lies "bare as the paunch of the purser's sow" to, let us say, a Germany running amuk, caring only to destroy from the air.
- (4) *YOUR NAVY.* Restore your independence, *by increasing your cruiser fleet.* Sift to the bottom the question of how far the air really has modified the battleship and convoy problem.
- (5) *YOUR AIR FORCE.* The risks of allowing the present situation to last are too great. You have made the disarmament gesture too long, if there is no real and wide-spread reply, and some sign of a repentant Germany, then *arm in the air and pay your young people to be air-minded.* Incidentally, discipline your own Air Force so that fifty of the finest young men should not chuck their lives away each year, by over-training, or, as their seniors say, disobeying instructions; either are bad. The air is not meant as a method of killing your best.
- (6) *YOUR MERCHANT MARINE.* Hit hard against subsidies that are killing your greatest industry and starving your finest population. Starve yourselves, go meatless days on end, if that will pay for its restoration. The British Empire perishes, Britannia becomes a work-house body, unless the Red Duster is restored to its proper position.

- (7) *YOUR ARMY*. Your army was never, in normal times, a continental army. It serves the Empire's purpose. You have reduced it terribly. Let it stay if you will see that it has the latest equipment. As the newer forms of army organization crystallize more definitely, re-organize, but do not listen to the cranks. You can turn any modern infantry or cavalry corps into whatever form of mechanized horror is desirable, as soon as you know what you want. The army as now organized is the finest preparation for any eventuality, and the best suited for the Empire's needs, and see that you can augment it quickly for some lesser trouble. Only see that you stock enough gauges of shells and gadgets to be able to re-produce quickly if need be. Then it should never be necessary to call the Nation to arms again.
- (8) *YOUR PUBLIC AND YOUR YOUTH*. Do not let them fall into the hands of the Hot Air Merchants. Persuade them not to elect to their Councils the miserables who don't like the trophies that show what better men than they did. Let youth glory in being ready to endure the sacrifices of their fathers should events demand it. It is not enough to be one of the leaders of justice and peace if you are not strong enough to maintain it.
- (9) *ABOVE ALL*, realize how the coming of Hitler has revolutionized the accepted *common sense of Peace*, which otherwise might have held the world—and how it compels a change of attitude.

Let us say once again *in finis* trust in God, Mr. Bull, and keep our Powder dry and hope that there will be many in the world of the poor and oppressed who shall say in the future as in the past, "Thank God for England!"



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